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MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

Information and French Support for Jacobite Ireland, 1689-1691

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**INFORMATION AND FRENCH SUPPORT FOR JACOBITE IRELAND,
1689–1691**

JONATHAN STUART KEOGH

Thesis submitted for the degree of

Master of Philosophy in History

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAE CP Archives des Affaires Etrangères, Correspondance Politique (Angleterre)

AN Archives Nationales, Fonds Marine Nationale

BL British Library

CNRS Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique

CSP Calendar State Papers, Domestic Series

DNB Dictionary of National Biography (Oxford UP, 2004)

f. folio (*as in a page in a manuscript*)

HMC Historical Manuscripts Commission

HMSO Her Majesty's Stationery Office

IMC Irish Manuscripts Commission

Mss. Manuscripts

NLI National Library of Ireland, Dublin

PRO Public Record Office, London

SHD Service Historique de la Défense, Fonds Armée de Terre, Vincennes

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DECLARATION

I, Jonathan Stuart Keogh, hereby certify that this thesis has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree. Unless otherwise stated, all references have been consulted by me.

Date:

Signature of candidate:

THESIS SUMMARY

Although conventional Irish historiography has viewed French support for the Jacobite war effort in Ireland in the period 1689-1691 largely in terms of military assistance, a small number of scholars have taken a more original view. Their works considered the interaction between the two groups by looking at both French and Irish sources and scholarship in tandem, thus creating a new paradigm through which to examine the period.

This new approach is adopted here and is applied to the concept of information as it related to French support for Jacobite Ireland. Through themes and individuals the crucial importance of information, its acquisition, concealment and transmission is shown in the context of the changing French appraisals of the Irish campaign. The information to be considered ranges from propaganda and diplomacy to court gossip and cryptography. Both thematic areas like propaganda and intelligence through correspondence are examined. Specific French individuals, exemplary in the appropriation and exploitation of information, are looked at and their contributions assessed.

The thesis shows that the French went to considerable effort to stay informed about the situation in Jacobite Ireland and to secure their channels of communication. The efforts of the new Williamite regime to intercept and disrupt that flow of information, both regarding correspondence and propaganda in an Irish and a Three-Kingdom context are also outlined. The study also considers domestic French discussions and court conflicts and how these may have influenced military events in Ireland.

In sum, this study argues that French support for James II was subject to internal discussion and brokerage of influence at court. The examination as a whole confirms information as a valid framework of enquiry to better understand French interaction with Jacobites in Ireland, but is also applicable in a wider context, that of the use of intelligence in the conflict between France and the new Williamite regime in the Three Kingdoms in the early period of the Nine Years War.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Recent decades have seen the flowering of scholarship on Jacobite Ireland and *louisquatorzien* France, the former particularly in the wake of the tercentenary of the Jacobite Wars in Ireland.¹ The greater availability of archival material, such as the landmark publication of Mulloy's edition of *Franco-Irish Correspondence*, has led to new and fruitful questions being asked of those sources and to the reappraisal of more traditional assumptions and approaches.² Nevertheless, the relationship between the two has not received due consideration. Studies of Jacobite Ireland in this period tend to paint the French involvement there in broad strokes, seldom engaging with the nuances. There are two notable exceptions to this trend: Symcox focused on the development of Louis XIV's strategy in relation to Ireland and Conroy looked at French maritime interest in Ireland in terms of navigation and cartography.³ Although their works differ greatly in style and scope, Symcox and Conroy demonstrate that a synthetic approach to French activity in relation to Ireland yields fresh insight about both spheres and is a useful way forward.

This study builds on their approach in analysing French support for James II and his forces in Ireland in the period 1689–1691; specifically, it examines aspects of transmission, circulation and appropriation of information related to French conduct of the Irish campaign. Situating this in the larger context of the War of the Three Kings as well as the start of the Nine Years War, this study proceeds thematically and conceptually. It examines a range of sources — both primary and secondary, Irish and French. Through case studies of the practical mechanics and of exemplary individuals, it explores topics including propaganda, diplomacy, strategy, court gossip and espionage, with particular emphasis on the nature and flow of information.

¹ By “louisquatorzien” I understand scholarly works on state and society in France in the reign of Louis XIV, 1643–1715.

² Sheila Mulloy, *Franco-Irish Correspondence 1688–1692*, Irish Manuscripts Commission, (Dublin, 1983–1984), 3 vols.

³ Geoffrey Symcox, *Louis XIV and the War in Ireland: A Study of his Strategic Thinking and Decision Making* (UCLA (Ph.D. thesis), 1967), hereafter called “Symcox, Thesis”.. Jane Conroy, “Galway Bay, Louis XIV's Navy and the ‘Petit Bougard’”, *JGAHS*, 48 (1997), 36–48. See also Conroy, “The French are on the Sea: Mapping the Irish Coastline, 1690” in Jane Conroy (ed.), *Franco-Irish Connections: Essays, Memoirs and Poems in Memory of Pierre Joannon* (Dublin, 2009).

Chapter I is a review of the secondary scholarship relevant to this study. It mainly covers works on Jacobite Ireland and seventeenth-century France under Louis XIV. It suggests that “crossover” studies — works which look at interactions between these two spheres — are few but offer fresh insights into both. This thesis thus extends that synthetic approach to the theme of information.

Chapter II begins that exploration. It treats of French interest in the production of Jacobite propaganda and goes on to examine its attempted circulation in an Irish and Three Kingdoms context. It also looks at some of the efforts of the Williamite regime in countering this.

Chapter III considers two exemplary French diplomats in Ireland, the well-known Comte D’Avaux and the shadowy Abbé de Gravel. It compares their roles and spheres of activity and shows how both figures and the sorts of information they provided shaped the French understanding of the evolving military and political situation in Jacobite Ireland.

Turning from figures in Ireland to those at the centre of decision-making in France, chapter IV looks at the Marquis de Chamlay, a key military strategist to Louvois and Louis XIV. It reveals that he advised them about the Irish campaign on matters ranging from military tactics to the manipulation of individuals through information.

Broadening to the wider setting of the French court, Chapter V focuses on the Comte de Lauzun and other influential personalities. Lauzun’s interactions with them, and particularly with Queen Mary of Modena, were motivated by personal gain but ultimately affected the nature of French support of James II. His tactics highlight the power of information and the importance of court politics more generally to understanding the French conduct of the campaign.

The final chapter analyses the practical flow of information and its processing. It deals with three interrelated topics. First, it explores how the French sent, received and protected key information. Secondly, it looks at how the French and British treated intercepted correspondence. Finally, it considers how these strategies changed as the war progressed and the French sphere of influence in Ireland shrank.

Through these case studies, this analysis contributes especially to the Irish scholarly debate on Jacobite Ireland by shedding further light on the mechanics of French involvement. Considering the French sources in this period in tandem with their Irish context and in

some cases counterparts shows the relationships and nuances of those mechanics. In so far as this period may be considered an “information age” like our own, this study considers the manner in which information brokers power and is a powerful causal factor which helps to explain better why events happened in the way that they did. In the process, it will show that the French policy towards James II’s campaign to overthrow William III was neither simplistic nor predetermined, as it has often been characterised.

CHAPTER I – LITERATURE SURVEY

Introduction

Soldiers fighting for three nations — Ireland, England and France — came together on Irish soil from 1689 to 1691.⁴ The main schools of historiography about this episode of the Nine Years War 1688–1697 reflect the priorities of these nations both then and now.⁵ The three schools tend to fall along national and linguistic lines and to reflect the considerations of those audiences. For example, one might characterise as “Irish historiography” works coming from an “Irish perspective” and for an “Irish audience”. Since the independence of southern Ireland in 1921, such historiography has generally been written in the English language and more often than not with Catholic sympathies. Although the approach of each of these schools has merits and contributes some important insights, it also has its limitations.

The British school

Later British historians, in their views of the events surrounding the “Glorious Revolution” of 1688, can be said to have moved some distance from the Whig school of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The views expressed by Macaulay and, following in his steps, Trevelyan now seem to belong to a bygone age when the “story” of England, as opposed to a “history”, was written in colourful literary style with the seeming aim to show retrospectively how an island kingdom was destined to rule over a great world empire.⁶ To an extent, it might be said to be English history rather than British. The exit of “bigoted” Catholic James II from England and the accession of his Protestant daughter Mary II and her Dutch husband constituted a necessary step towards “progress” and the constitutional monarchy enjoyed in the Victorian Britain reading those “histories”. The pivotal event of

⁴ Over the course of the war in Ireland, there were troops from many different nationalities fighting under different flags, including Irish, English, Scottish, French, Dutch, Danish, Germans and Swiss.

⁵ The conflict is also sometimes termed the War of the Grand Alliance. The French refer to this conflict as the War of the League of Augsburg (*la guerre de la Ligue d'Augsbourg*). There were soldiers fighting in Ireland from many different states and owing allegiance to different rulers; but wherever they were from, they fought for either William III, king of England, or James II and Louis XIV. In William's army, for example, there were Dutch regulars, French Huguenot forces, Danish mercenaries and English soldiers.

⁶ Thomas B. Macaulay, *A History of England from the Accession of James the Second* (London, 1848–1849), George Trevelyan, *England under the Stuarts*, 16th edn (London, 1933); originally published in 1904.

the “Glorious Revolution” (itself a popular Whig term) contributed in assisting in the expansion of the British economy, the growth of overseas trade and greater investment in the Royal Navy — all key factors in contributing to the expansion of the Empire.

That such a view was of its time and is no longer current is clearly shown by modern historians such as Harris.⁷ His work exemplifies the newer thinking for recasting the events more evenly into a composite kingdom context than the older schools of scholarship had done, yet has still met with criticism.⁸ The works are especially good for the important English political context, both pre-dating James II for events such as the Exclusion Crisis as well as offering background to the landing of William of Orange at Torbay in November 1688 and the early years of the reign of the Joint Monarchs. Laudably, there are separate sections on the parallel evolution in Scotland and Ireland, with the author showing that the revolution was not as bloodless as traditional writers have stated. A criticism would be that the book is weaker post-1692, especially the start of the Georgian era, but this is beyond my current scope. In summary, if politics and society in Britain is the focal point of Harris, the necessary continental dimension to events is lacking emphasis. In contrast, both Israel and Mijers and Onnekink give a broader view of the reasons and motivations behind Prince William of Orange’s English intervention or (to use a less “Whiggish” term) invasion.⁹ They put some of the seeds for the “Glorious Revolution” back into its continental European context, from which it had been led away by generations of understandably Anglo-centric history writers. Figuratively speaking, they shift the focus from London looking around the British Isles to where it arguably more properly belongs, to the Apeldoorn palace and William of Orange looking at England as a necessary ally to recruit against Louis XIV.¹⁰

William was prompted by fears of a repeat of the Franco-Dutch wars of the 1670s and by France’s expansionist policy aimed at the Spanish Netherlands, the only buffer between its own territories and those of the Dutch. Israel underlines how William directly planned “regime change” to ensure English resources were brought to bear against France. The

⁷ Tim Harris, *Revolution: The Great Crisis of the British Monarchy, 1685–1720* (London, 2007).

⁸ See David Womersley’s review at www.socialaffairsunit.rog.uk.

⁹ Jonathan I. Israel, ‘The Dutch Role in the Glorious Revolution’, 105-162, in Israel, *The Anglo-Dutch Moment: Essays on the Glorious Revolution and its World Impact* (Cambridge, 1991). Esther Mijers and David Onnekink, *Redefining William III: The Stadholder-King* (Aldershot, 2007).

¹⁰ Apeldoorn is many kilometres from the coast, so this is a figurative expression. It refers to J.I. Israel, who emphasises William of Orange’s more continental concerns.

authors demonstrate how the expedition was only possible when William secured funding from the States General. Here more republican, mercantile elements in Amsterdam had swung in his favour because of newly adopted French protectionist measures aimed at restricting the importation of Dutch goods. Success for the coup was possible given prevailing English opposition to James's pro-Catholic policies from both key nobles and the populace. Moreover, there was fear of French domestic noble support popular opinion among opponents of James. These domestic opponents were afraid not only of his pro-Catholic policies, which undermined Anglican primacy, but also that in Europe he would support Louis if he could or at best remain neutral in an upcoming struggle. The English Crown was the last piece in the jigsaw for the anti-French League of Augsburg that William had helped to build to be able to confront the Sun King.

Another part of the reaction to the Whig school has included attempts to rehabilitate James II, with Miller being a key proponent.¹¹ For scholarly investigation of Jacobite politics in the period of exile, the main English language scholar is Corp.¹² His work points to a couple of fruitful avenues for the purposes of my own studies and includes important essays by Gregg.

Regarding English and later British foreign policy, George's article, although now quite dated, is nonetheless accurate in portraying James as less financially dependent on subventions from France than his brother Charles II had been and therefore less open to supporting Louis's foreign policy. The conclusion made, perhaps fancifully, is that had James remained king, he would probably have preferred England to remain neutral in a more general European War, concentrating instead on a blue-water policy involving Royal Navy protection of trade and expansion of overseas territories.¹³

For a view of British strategic thinking and investigation in the "long eighteenth century", Black has contributed a number of works. His book from 1999 has an enlightening historiographical piece which looks at how Britain had the same political debate as France as to whether or not to expend resources on a continental policy or an overseas, trade-based

¹¹ John Miller, *James II: A Study in Kingship* (Hove, 1978).

¹² Edward Corp (ed.), *A Court in Exile: The Stuarts in France 1689–1718* (Cambridge, 2009). See Edward Gregg's essay, "France, Rome and the exiled Stuarts, 1689-1713" in Corp's work.

¹³ Robert George, "Financial Relations between Louis XIV and James II", *Journal of Modern History* (April 1931).

strategy.¹⁴ The author attempts to cast doubt on a British “preference” for a “blue-water” strategy, suggesting it was less a choice and more a consequence of poor performance for its continental European land army exploits, with Marlborough being the exception. It does, however, argue convincingly that by the end of the Nine Years War in 1697, English military organisation as regards training, equipment and logistics was on a par with where France had been since the early 1680s. Although not strictly relevant to Ireland in 1689–1691, it is still a thought-provoking essay on strategic considerations of the age and quite applicable to France also.

The Irish school

Generally speaking, the “Irish school” understands the episode as part of a larger narrative of Irish conflict with Britain, a narrative that was very much alive until comparatively recently. As it could be validly argued that the Irish school partly functions in relation to British scholarship, I have treated the latter contributors first. For example, the defeat of the forces of James II at the Battle of the Boyne in July 1690 was a pivotal moment in the war of 1689–1691. This Williamite victory is celebrated to this day by many Northern Irish Protestants as “The Glorious Twelfth”.

From the perspective of the Irish school, the seventeenth-century struggle between the Anglo-Irish Jacobites and Williamites is also a struggle between Catholics and Protestants, as well as between England and Ireland. Although French involvement and aid to Ireland is acknowledged, it tends to be mentioned rather than investigated. French policy in 1689–1691 is understood teleologically and as such as specific to Ireland. Overall, the episode has traditionally been viewed divorced from its larger continental European context.

If earlier British (or rather English) historiography of the Early Modern period can be said to have been penned in the shadow of Macaulay, one could argue that Irish historiography from c.1900 until the 1960s suffered from a “syndrome” peculiar to nascent states, where history is reappraised and rewritten to reflect the new national consciousness. For the architects of the independent southern Irish State the previous official British narrative had to be actively countered, and the history rewritten for the schoolbooks of the future citizens. More recent “Empire memories” of Irish soldiers in Redcoat uniforms putting down the Indian Mutiny or later dying for King and Country in the trenches of Flanders or on the beaches of Gallipoli were replaced with those “independent” Irish hero figures such

¹⁴ Jeremy Black, *Britain as a Military Power, 1688–1815*, (London, 1999).

as Patrick Pearse and Michael Collins. Once these were installed in the mental Pantheon of the new State, there was then a touching-up of the nationalist narrative to retrospectively include earlier figures in Irish history, avoiding those deemed part of an Irish or Ulster Unionist tradition. For our purposes here, these included the Catholic James II and leading “proto-nationalists” such as Jacobites Patrick Sarsfield and Richard Talbot, Earl of Tyrconnell.

In the 1960s came a desire to revise and revisit this “nationalist” agenda. A good example of this was the undertaking of a multi-volume history by Moody, Martin and Byrne. Those works took to a fresh audience the fruits of more up-to-date research and objective appraisal of not only military and political events but also economic and cultural trends, written by chosen specialists.¹⁵ This work is useful in giving background to the internal politics and economy of Ireland in the Age of Restoration under Charles II and then under James II. Simms, the author of an earlier detailed work on the period contributed the chapter on the armed conflict, “The War of the Two Kings, 1685–1691”.¹⁶ The chapter title is worthy of attention in itself and could be viewed as being “of its time”, situating the struggle as an extension of the “Glorious Revolution” in England, divorced from a continental setting. From a historiographical point of view, the conflict between James II and William of Orange is today more likely to be called “the War of the Three Kings”, in my view properly including Louis XIV as a lead player and situating the war in the broader European context of the Nine Years War.¹⁷

The tercentenaries of the “Glorious Revolution” in 1988 and the Battle of Boyne in 1990 prompted renewed popular interest in the conflict. Maguire’s work from 1990 is an overview by different authors of the conflict on land and sea and, almost uniquely, provides insights into the contemporary propaganda conflict.¹⁸ Similar collection works are

¹⁵ The series was first mooted in 1962. The relevant volume here is T.W. Moody, F.X. Martin and F.J. Byrne (eds), vol.III, *Early Modern Ireland, 1534–1691*, which first appeared in 1976.

¹⁶ John Gerald Simms, *Jacobite Ireland 1685–1691* (Dublin, 1969). Its use of a wide range of original sources and its readable style mean it has stood the test of time well and was reprinted in 2000.

¹⁷ <http://www.battleoftheboyne.ie/>.

¹⁸ W.A. Maguire, *Kings in Conflict: The revolutionary war in Ireland and its Aftermath, 1689–1750* (Belfast, 1990).

those by Whelan and Bartlett.¹⁹ These collections contain essays by historians such as Murtagh and Childs, who later went on to produce larger contributions to the military history debate.²⁰

Military history indeed has shown itself to be a route to a more general readership than traditional academia. Such historians generally view this episode with particular emphasis on military strategy and its critique. The period for my inquiry, 1688–1691, has ample scope for this, with numerous studies of the various battles and sieges. These works have a narrower focus than the general, more academically oriented political studies, and concentrate on equipment, logistics, commanders and battlefield manoeuvres. The French military contribution to the Jacobite war effort in Ireland tends to be viewed in quite a uniform manner and relates to who was there, what they did in the field, what weapons they used and how they were supplied, rather than why they were there at all and what they hoped to gain beyond an immediate military advantage.²¹ Beyond their natural focus, the works reveal themselves incurious about wider considerations in France.

The Irish perspective is to some extent a reaction to the line taken by the “British school” of historiography. The British school understands the Irish conflict in a slightly broader manner, as part of the history of the archipelago — that is to say, the maintenance of control over the three kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland. In a general sense, these Irish events were indeed part of the wider struggle between James II and William for control of these crowns, and the resulting shifts in political power away from a more absolute monarchy. The consequences were neither experienced nor historiographically perceived in the same way.

¹⁹ Bernadette Whelan (ed.), *The Last of the Great Wars: Essays on the Wars of the Three Kings in Ireland, 1688–1691* (Limerick, 1995) and Thomas Bartlett (ed.), *A Military History of Ireland* (Cambridge, 1996).

²⁰ John Childs, who later wrote *The Williamite Wars in Ireland 1688–1691* (Hambledon, 2007), had a similar chapter in Bartlett’s book. Harman Murtagh of the Military History Society of Ireland wrote *The Battle of the Boyne: A Battlefield Guide* (Drogheda, 2007).

²¹ Examples of these are Michael McNally and Graham Turner, *Battle of the Boyne: The Irish Campaign for the English Crown* (Oxford, 2005) in the well-known Osprey Battles series. Similarly, the very readable *Siege of Derry* by non-fiction writer Carlo Gébler (London, 2006), although aimed at a more popular audience, is nonetheless well annotated, albeit in a non-scholarly fashion. Nevertheless, some of their conclusions are debatable. McNally, for example, opines that Lauzun’s appointment to Ireland was a sinecure (p.42).

In studies of the Irish campaigns of 1688–1691, writers of the Irish and British schools refer to the French of necessity. This is more often than not in their purely functional or military capacity, talking about their major figures *in Ireland*, be it the diplomat Comte D’Avaux in 1689 or their army commanders, such as the Comte de Lauzun in 1690 or the Marquis de St. Ruth in 1691. Their motivations (strategic or otherwise) and those of the French monarch and ministers who sent them to Ireland are largely viewed in a monolithic light, if at all. Because the French only sent limited resources to what was a peripheral theatre, the assumption is that was all the French had ever intended the Irish campaign to be. There is sometimes even an assumption that Ireland had always been the *only* destination in scope for the French, which is incorrect and seems patently teleological. Symcox in his works has shed more light on these areas than most writers, yet his conclusions do not seem to have been included in the current corpus of secondary literature to the extent that one might have expected.²² This is surprising and is an area worthy of further scrutiny, historiographically if nothing else.²³

Louisquatorzien France

Although one cannot really talk of a “French school” of historiography, there are nonetheless works in French oriented towards national-linguistic priorities no less than the Irish and British. The genre approaches the period within the narrative of an era of great military prowess and cultural development, termed *Le Grand Siècle* – “The Great Century”. Although clearly ensconced in the historiography of the modern French Republic as part of the disgraced *Ancien Régime*, the “Sun King” paradoxically is still viewed positively and occupies a mental pedestal in the French national identity similar to those of Napoleon and Charles de Gaulle.

This reverence extends into historiography. Despite the justified success of the “Annales School” in shifting the focus of historians from traditional accounts of the “great and good” to social and economic history and Louis’s poorer subjects, the Sun King consistently remains a field of research in his own right; witness the abundance of biographies produced

²² Geoffrey Symcox, *The Crisis of French Sea Power, 1688–1697: From the Guerre d’Escadre to the Guerre de Course* (The Hague, 1974). Symcox’s thesis on Louis XIV’s strategic decision-making regarding Ireland is not in the bibliography of Lynn’s *Giant of the Grand Siècle*, yet it would appear to be relevant. It was included in Rowland’s *Dynastic State*.

²³ The Symcox 1967 thesis is not freely available (it can still be purchased) and Symcox followed it up with a book: as a consequence, it might be assumed that arguments from the thesis are more developed in the book. This may be the case elsewhere but not for Symcox, as the subject matter is different.

on a fairly regular basis.²⁴ Many eminent French historians of the pre-Revolution period have contributed studies of *Le Roi Soleil*.²⁵ These all provide a broad narrative of the monarch's life, and cover a wide range of personal, political and military aspects of the reign over and above the narrow, old-fashioned focus the French term as *histoire-bataille*. These historians, like British or Irish historians, are mainly writing the biographies for and from their own national-linguistic audience in the context of "their" national story.

More generally, some of these same writers also produced large-format comprehensive general reference works covering the major events, figures and institutions, both of the reign of Louis XIV and the wider field of pre-revolutionary France. Chief among these are Bluche and Bély.²⁶ The developing area of studies of Louis XIV's state and its mechanisms as a focus for new investigation by both French-language and English-language scholars will be treated below. Bély has also written an extensive work on French diplomacy, but this deals with a later period than I am concerned with.²⁷ Duccini's book on France in the seventeenth century gives a general introduction to French organs of government, namely the various *conseils*, office-holders and institutions. She also produced a work on state propaganda in France under Louis XIII which relates to aspects of this study.²⁸

If there is an area that transcends the national-linguistic framework and relates to this study, it is surely that of France under its most famous monarch. This is a school of expanding remit, moving from the development and growth of the French army and navy through to a broader consideration of the growth of bureaucracy and administration. This genre also includes studies of regional institutions around France and the study of key individuals and families looking at the importance of *clientèles* in developing circles of social influence for advancement. Greater access to and analysis of French diplomatic, military, naval and, more recently, family archives have greatly contributed to this expansion. Here it may be said that anglophone writers led the way.

²⁴ Pierre Goubert's scholarship has attempted to bridge the gap between social history and that of "great event or great figures". See his *Louis XIV et Vingt Millions de Français* (Paris, 1966).

²⁵ To cite but a few: François Bluche, *Louis XIV* (Paris, 1986); Olivier Chaline, *Le Règne de Louis XIV* (Paris, 2005); and Jean Petitfils, *Louis XIV* (Paris, 2008).

²⁶ Fr. Bluche, *Dictionnaire du Grand Siècle* (Paris, 1993) and Lucien Bély, *Dictionnaire de l'Ancien Régime* (Paris, 2002).

²⁷ Bély, *Espions et Ambassadeurs au Temps de Louis XIV* (Paris, 2002).

²⁸ Hélène Duccini, *Histoire de la France au 17^e Siècle* (Paris, 2007).

An early contributor to the increasing interest in *louisquatorzien* France and questioning of the nature of development of French military policies is Symcox's thought-provoking 1974 monograph on the challenges facing the French navy in this period.²⁹ This is a work of some bearing on my focus as it refers to French sea strategy. The author shows how support for Jacobite Ireland fitted only tangentially into their plans and was a key strategic error. The same author foreshadowed his naval strategy book through his doctoral thesis.³⁰ Here Symcox tried to situate the Irish campaign in the context of a European struggle that had taken Louis XIV by surprise and shows Louis's approach to Ireland was essentially a reactive one. The author believes both the king and his naval minister missed the bigger strategic opportunity Ireland presented. A more enterprising naval policy organised around blockading Ireland from English assistance would have ensured a more stable base for James II from which to threaten William. His examination of decision-making by the French government in relation to Ireland is useful for this study and very original in my view, as it uses the example of the Irish war to examine French topics.

The nature of the growth of the French State in the century of Louis XIV in various forms has been a fertile ground for scholarship and reflects wider studies examining the growth of bureaucracy and administration around Europe in this period. Key contributors to the debates have been academics such as Baxter, Sonnino, and Mettam.³¹ From formerly accepting assumptions that the late-seventeenth-century France of Louis XIV was the epitome of an absolutist monarchy, newer scholarship has painted a more nuanced view of that state and how it functioned.³² Many regionally based investigations have underlined how intertwined royal administration and local interests were. They reveal a less *étatist* government, concerned with establishing royal authority but also respecting regional traditions and institutions and collaborating with local elites in a spirit of mutual support and financial reward.

One might say that the wider context of France's often expansionist foreign policy has received less attention than the diplomats applying the policies. Those studies done outline an overweening confidence building in the years before the Nine Years War, although

²⁹ Symcox, *The Crisis of French Sea Power*.

³⁰ Symcox, *Thesis*.

³¹ Douglas Baxter, *Servants of the Sword: French Army Intendants 1630–1670* (Illinois, 1967). Mettam, *Power and Faction in Louis XIV's France*, (Oxford, 1988)

³² Surely a term for Louis XIV more suited to England's Henry VIII. Louis never changed his nation's religion to anything like the extent of the Tudor. Henrician crushing of popular revolts was every bit as bloody as anything under Louis.

some perceptive articles, such as Place's study of diplomatic events, emphasise France's unpreparedness coming up to the outbreak of war in 1688 in Germany.³³ On the circumstances leading to the outbreak of a more generalised European conflict in 1688, and the French rationale in this, there is no better introduction than Symcox in "Louis XIV and the outbreak of the Nine Years War".³⁴

Although not strictly linked to the development of the French armed forces, Chapman's pioneering prosopographical work from 2004 is very much in the *louisquatorzien* school examining society.³⁵ This detailed exploration of the Pontchartrain family and its gradual climb of the social ladder to power charts how a clan of Breton lawyers rose to become powerful ministers who served successive French monarchs for almost a century. It shows how local notables seeking patronage and advantageous marriages could become national figures dispensing favours and influence. Louis Phélypeaux, Comte de Pontchartrain, took over the administration of the French navy on the death of Seignelay in 1690, and therefore has a bearing on Irish affairs in the 1690–1691 campaigns. The author underlines the persistence of clienteles and their importance in the navy bureaucracy as well as the social ties binding families of the upper echelons of administrative nobility to both each other and the king. This concept in social history is reminiscent of the patricians of ancient Rome and is applicable cross-border.

Regarding the French army more specifically, Rowlands has examined how increased state organisation and bureaucracy combined with clienteles and aristocratic self-interest in helping to forge the greatest military machine in Europe in the period.³⁶ His examination of the role of the Le Tellier clan and the issues they encountered is relevant to my own researches regarding Ireland and the French involvement. Furthermore, the study offers a good introduction to the intricacies of the French state taxation and revenue collection

³³ Richard Place, "The Self-Deception of the Strong: France on the eve of the War of the League of Augsburg", *French Historical Studies*, vol.6, no.4 (1970). Also by the same author, "Bavaria and the Collapse of Louis XIV's Germany Policy, 1687–88", *Journal of Modern History*, no.49 (1977), 369.

³⁴ Geoffrey Symcox, "The Outbreak of the Nine Years War" in R. Hatton (ed.), *Louis XIV and Europe* (Columbus, 1976).

³⁵ Sara Chapman, *Private Ambition and Political Alliances: The Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain and Louis XIV's Government, 1660–1715*, (Rochester NY, 2004).

³⁶ Guy Rowlands, *The Dynastic State and the Army under Louis XIV: Royal Service and Private Interest 1661–1701* (2002).

systems so necessary to the growth of the army and its associated administration.³⁷ It also looks at the concerns of the monarchy for providing the *noblesse d'épée* with chances for advancement in the armed forces, when posts in the administration were increasing the domain of the socially inferior *noblesse de robe*. French historian Dré villon has also contributed here in his work examining the changing perception by the lower French aristocracy of the army as their proper place for service and the path to preferment.³⁸

Rowlands is clear in differentiating himself from Lynn, however, in the appraisal of how those at the pinnacle of government wholly or partly controlled military decision-making.³⁹ This debate focuses on the so-called *stratégie de cabinet* and on who actually formulated military strategy and how much latitude was left to commanders in the field. This debate is relevant to the involvement of the French militarily supporting James II. Cénat's work is a French-language contribution to this field and the broader Rowlands-Lynn debates on formulation of military policy.⁴⁰ His recent biography of Chamlay, an influential advisor to Louis XIV, is relevant to this study and the debate on French military command and control.⁴¹

Similar veins of research are now being examined by younger French-language historians who are delving deeper into considerable and still somewhat uncharted manuscript resources to gain a better knowledge of the formation of policy in France under Louis XIV and his ministers and of how decisions were made and then carried out. Sarmant, who obtained his doctorate from the Ecole des Chartes et des Manuscrits in 2003, combined forces with fellow archivist Salat to look at previously unedited correspondence between the Marquis de Louvois and his royal master.⁴² Although first and foremost an edition of primary-source material, it also contains, usefully for my purposes, a solid introduction to the workings of the French army's administration in a period, including that of French involvement in Ireland. His source for Louvois's records is the French Army archives,

³⁷ Similar work on the expansion of bureaucracy and the army has been done by Christopher Storrs in an essay on Savoy in C. Storrs (ed.), *The Fiscal-Military State in Eighteenth Century Europe* (Farnham, 2009).

³⁸ Hervé Drevillon, *L'Impôt du Sang* (Paris, 2005).

³⁹ John A. Lynn, *Giant of the Grand Siècle: The French Army 1660–1715*, (Cambridge, 1997).

⁴⁰ Jean-Philippe Cénat, "Le Ravage du Palatinat: Politique de Destruction, Stratégie de Cabinet et Propagande au Début de la Guerre de la Ligue d'Augsbourg", *Revue Historique* (2005).

⁴¹ Jean-Philippe Cénat, *Chamlay, le Stratège Secret de Louis XIV* (Paris, 2011).

⁴² Nicole Salat and Thierry Sarmant, *Politique, Guerre et Fortification au Grand Siècle: Lettres de Louvois à Louis XIV 1679–91* (Paris, 2003).

Service Historique de la Défense (SHD), based at the Château de Vincennes just outside Paris.

A pertinent follow-on article and clearly based on the same body of primary research is Sarmant's examination of Louvois's methods of gathering information on particular theatres of operations through the organisation of networks of correspondents.⁴³ A second publication of note (again, collaborative) is his 2010 work with Stoll investigating the machinery of government under the Sun King. It contains some treatment of conflicts within the upper echelons of government, which possibly influenced policy formation and may have had pertinence to events in Ireland.

On propaganda and control of Information in relation to the scope of this work, the main works relevant are those by Claydon for William III and Klaitis concerning French propaganda under Louis XIV.

Biographies

Biographies generally, though not always, tend to fall into one of the three national-linguistic paradigms referred to above.⁴⁴ They are predominantly written about the perceived "great" or "famous" (and "infamous") figures of that particular nation, such as James II or William III for England (and Holland); Louis XIV, his war minister the Marquis de Louvois or Jean-Baptiste Colbert (Senior) for France; and, arguably, Patrick Sarsfield for Ireland.⁴⁵ Louis XIV, however, is a figure of such supranational fascination that works on him can be found in many languages. Of those in English, Wolf is a reference that has stood the test of time.⁴⁶

It can be argued that Louis's long shadow has hidden the careers of his less well-known servants in that language and as such these figures, though important, can appear secondary. One exception is a couple of now dated works regarding Jean-Baptiste Colbert

⁴³ Thierry Sarmant, "Les Turcs Font Merveilles: Louvois, Observateur de l'Europe Centrale et Orientale, 1679–1691", *Revue XVIIe Siècle*, 57 (2005).

⁴⁴ As the scope here is French involvement in Jacobite Ireland, the focus from the biographical standpoint has been mainly, though not exclusively, on Irish and French biography.

⁴⁵ See W. Troost & J.C. Grayson, *William III, the Stadholder-King: A Political Biography* (Aldershot, 2005). Miller, *James II: a study in kingship* (London, 1989), See also J. Callow, *The King in Exile: James II, Warrior, King and Saint* (Stroud, 2004).

⁴⁶ John B. Wolf, *Louis XIV* (London, 1968), David Sturdy, *Louis XIV* (New York, 1998)

Sr (1630–1683) and his economic *oeuvre*.⁴⁷ In French, a scholarly work on James II has only just appeared, with nothing on William III in French for a long period.⁴⁸

More unusual are biographies about the “less famous”, such as Tyrconnell for Ireland and Lauzun and Seignelay for France. Works on such figures tend to come along sporadically, after long gaps in the scholarship, and are almost exclusively written from their own national-linguistic school. When these figures are revived, generally after a lag of a generation or two, they are sometimes reworked according to the priorities of the social or historiographical currents at the time.

Biographies of female figures of the age of Louis XIV also have relevance to this study. Recent works have focused on influential noble women at court, such as the Sun King’s influential mistress, Madame de Montespan, or his later morganatic wife, Madame de Maintenon.⁴⁹ Although it might be disputed to say these works fall into the *louisquatorzien* studies - looking at the French state under Louis XIV -, there is a sense that the experiences and relationships of these women to the broader patriarchal society in which they moved can assist in understanding that society and are therefore relevant. These works look at historical and personal development but differ from those on figures famed for their literary talents, such as Madame de Sévigné. Those relevant to my interest are figures such as Mary of Modena, exiled Queen to James II, and Madame de Maintenon, as mentioned. These figures could and did act as brokers of communication and influence between male figures, as will be demonstrated in this study.⁵⁰

Irish biography

Covering Irish historical figures is not such a well-trodden path, so older publications can still be important. Despite a relative lack of recent scholarship, the works nonetheless illuminate how the individuals concerned interacted with others in a cross-cultural setting. Examples of these for my scope are Murphy on the Jacobite general Justin McCarthy, and Petrie’s now dated biography of Richard Talbot, Earl of Tyrconnell (c.1630–1691), which

⁴⁷ Among others, Charles W. Cole, *Colbert and a Century of French Mercantilism*, (North Haven CT, 1964).

⁴⁸ Nathalie Genet-Rouffiac, *Jacques II d’Angleterre: Le Roi qui Voulut être Saint* (Paris, 2011).

⁴⁹ Veronica Buckley, *Madame de Maintenon* (London, 2008). Lisa Hilton, *The Real Queen of France: Athénaïs & Louis XIV* (Brown, 2002). In French, see André Castelot, *Madame de Maintenon, la Reine Secrète* (Paris, 1996).

⁵⁰ Carola Oman, *Mary of Modena* (London, 1962).

traces his fortunes from Royalist exile in the 1650s to his apogee as Lord Deputy of Ireland under James II.⁵¹ These works date from a time when a number of key primary sources were not as readily available in edited format as they are today.

A newer work is that by Wauchope on another Jacobite army commander, Patrick Sarsfield (1655–1693).⁵² (His fame is mainly due to the daring raid he carried out behind enemy lines, which resulted in the destruction of King William’s artillery train on its way to Limerick during the first siege of that city in August 1690.) This earned him a place in Irish historical hagiography, from whence he has not budged. Wauchope (himself a descendant of one of James II’s Scottish colonels) has clearly taken a leaf out of Petrie’s book in the treatment of his subject. The tactic of adding “and the Williamite War” to the title allows the author to make up for the limited, verifiable biographical facts of its central character (as the author freely admits) by giving a good narrative account of the Irish conflict as a whole. One downside of the book, common with many Irish works, is that it presents a monolithic view of French influence.

Francophone biographies

The Marquis de Louvois (1641–1691), war minister to Louis XIV, has been the subject of a number of French-language monographs. The key work in the field is still that by Corvisier which provides a very good grounding to the various areas of that minister’s involvement.⁵³ The character which emerges is one with incredible energy and an uncanny attention to detail in army administration who had the implicit trust of the Sun King for most of his career. He was heavily involved in the supplying of the Irish campaign and often had influence over policy there. The work itself is organised thematically, as regards the different posts Louvois occupied. Corvisier acknowledges his debt to a previous biographer, Rousset.⁵⁴ This more comprehensive work is still relevant for my purposes because there are more references to original sources than in Corvisier, although Rousset is, like many a biographer, clearly a partisan of his subject. One criticism of Corvisier’s

⁵¹ John A. Murphy, *Justin McCarthy, Lord Mountcashel* (Cork UP 1959). Sir Charles Petrie, *The Great Tyrconnell: A Chapter in Anglo-Irish Relations* (Dublin, 1972).

⁵² Piers Wauchope, *Patrick Sarsfield and the Williamite War* (Kildare, 1992).

⁵³ André Corvisier, *Louvois* (Paris, 1983).

⁵⁴ Camille Rousset, *Histoire de Louvois et de son Administration Politique et Militaire* (Paris, 1862–1864), 4 vols.

book work might be that, although a fine scholarly work in its breadth, many of its quotations and references are not footnoted or endnoted.⁵⁵

Richardt's monograph on Louvois is less detailed than either Corvisier or Rousset, but reflects more up-to-date research and is less reverential in tone and content than either of the others.⁵⁶ All these works refer to some extent to the rivalries this minister entertained with the Colbert family. André's account on the development of French army administration under Louvois and his father before him also contains enough biographical detail to merit mentioning it here.⁵⁷ It is worth noting in passing that, to my knowledge, Louvois has never been the subject of an English-language biography. Another work relevant to my scope is Petitfils's account of the career of the Comte de Lauzun, the mercurial French courtier and sometime commander of French forces in Ireland. This entertaining work sheds light on Louis XIV's court and points to areas of internal French rivalries and court intrigues not revealed in English-language works. It is an updated investigation of the figure building on an older work.⁵⁸ Similarly relevant is Dingli's examination of the life of the Marquis de Seignelay (1651–1690), a short-lived though influential French navy minister under Louis XIV and a scion of the Colbert clan.⁵⁹ He was quite involved in Irish affairs on behalf of the Sun King and was a competitor to Louvois as regards garnering the king's support for his projects.

In biographies, it is to some extent inevitable that “great figures” of a nation and the nation's self-perception and self-representation occupy centre stage in their historical inquiries. Other nation's heroes act more as stock characters with bit parts in teleological if not also somewhat anachronistic narratives. These narratives also bear the cultural imprint of language. The national-linguistic approaches to this episode in history are happily not the only ones. Other approaches, which to some extent overlap with the aforementioned ones, open up “national” stories to greater analysis and consideration in a wider, continental European setting and are also worthy of consideration.

⁵⁵ This is a characteristic common to a number of the French-language biographies, perhaps aimed more at shop shelves than the university libraries' bookshelves.

⁵⁶ Aimé Richardt, *Louvois: le bras armé de Louis XIV* (Paris, 1996).

⁵⁷ Louis Andre, *Michel le Tellier et Louvois*, (Paris, 1942)

⁵⁸ Jean Petitfils, *Lauzun ou l'Insolente Séduction* (Paris, 1998). Le Duc de la Force, *Lauzun, un Courtisan du Grand Roi* (Paris, 1913).

⁵⁹ Dingli, *Le fils flamboyant : Colbert Marquis de Seignelay*. (Paris, 1997). Seignelay was also responsible for Paris, the clergy and the administration of the king's household.

As evidenced by the range of works cited above, there is a clear historiography of all the major events and historical characters in the great events in Ireland, Britain, and France in the 1688–1691 period. Those cited above are all highly informative and offer useful background to my area of focus. Not all scholars consider the historiography, much less in a systematic way in the introduction. It can therefore be difficult to trace and evaluate their analysis. This is especially so for publications aimed at a less academic readership. Latterly, authors place the conflict in Ireland squarely in its general supranational, European context. There is therefore a growing awareness of the touchpoints between the national frameworks in a way that heretofore had not been highlighted. It is to this shift in perception away from an Irish or British historiographical tradition and towards that of *louisquatorzien* government that I wish to contribute in my thesis, albeit primarily in an Irish historical context.

There are trends common to the writings of the three “national stories”. The respective foci of these “schools” are not the only evidence that, in my opinion, scholars have essentially been writing history for a specific national audience; the other is language. That scholarship is published in the prevailing national language is no surprise. More revealing is the language of the sources, primary and secondary, which these scholars take into account in their studies. Generally speaking, for much of the nineteenth century, the Irish and British schools did not tend to consider much evidence from primary sources written in French.⁶⁰ The same could be said regarding the French not considering many primary sources written in English. This was partly due to access it has to be said.⁶¹

Scholarship from the 1960s onwards begins to see more crossovers at the level of secondary sources too, with universities in the US producing much work on France in this era. Scholars since have started to take into account secondary sources written in languages other than their own to a greater degree than before, and themselves to be considered by scholars from other national-linguistic schools, with thought-provoking results. From this point of view of cultural crosspollination, it is worth noting that recent English-language historians such as Rowlands and Chapman now regularly feature in the bibliographies of works of the younger French historians. The same cannot be said for earlier Francophone

⁶⁰ Between 1930 and 1990, the Irish Manuscripts Commission contributed to making available primary material relating to various forces in Ireland in 1688–1691, notably from French-, Danish- and German-language sources.

⁶¹ Irish-language sources are not numerous or widely available. Analysis of these can be found in Eamonn ó Ciardha, *Ireland and the Jacobite Cause 1685–1766: A Fatal Attachment* (Dublin, 2004).

authors whose works were rarely consulted by Anglophone scholars Goubert and André figure in English language works partly because of translations. It is not yet clear whether the recent French works cited above will find their way into the bibliographies of future English-language writing on the age of Louis XIV. Overall, therefore, the priorities and selection criteria of scholarship and the language of the influences (secondary sources) studied seem to be mutually reinforcing, and scholarship continues to be imbued at various levels with the language of the civilisation in which it is written and which its target audience uses.

In conclusion, there is I believe a framework of inquiry that has been overlooked for Ireland in the years 1689–1691 that is worthy of further examination. This is to take the struggle more clearly out of its Irish and British context and to place it in a French setting, asking a different set of questions relating less to Ireland and more to France. As stated in the “General Introduction” this will be done using the theme of information, primarily its acquisition and circulation between France and Jacobite Ireland. This concentration is reflected in the literature survey above. Even though historically Ireland at the time was viewed as an integral part of the Three Kingdoms - and was viewed as such by the French - methodologically speaking the focus here is on Franco-Irish interreactions in a Jacobite context. Aspects of works of similar interest but wider or different scope were consulted as they contribute to the focus of this study.

CHAPTER II – JACOBITE PRINTED PROPAGANDA: FROM FRANCE TO A THREE-KINGDOM CONTEXT

Introduction

The aim of this section to shed light on what might be termed “information wars” both in Ireland and the wider context of Jacobites in a Three Kingdom context. It will show ways in which Jacobite propaganda was encouraged by the French who wished to influence its content. The study moves on to look at Jacobite efforts to print propaganda material both for consumption in Ireland and distribution in Scotland and England. Some examples will be given for “domestic” Jacobite propaganda production in Britain and how the Williamite regime sought to crack down on this activity and prevent its circulation.

During the “Glorious Revolution”, the successful pro-Williamite propaganda machine had been deployed to its full extent to influence public opinion, much to the detriment of James II’s image and cause. This has been examined already by historians such as Claydon and Schwoerer for England and Hayton for Ireland, and it is the intention to treat further of it here.⁶² Bibliographies of these works echo the old adage of history being written by the victors. Indeed, the volume of surviving Williamite publications, showing how “informationally aware” the Williamites were, contrasts with the relative paucity of Jacobite “promotional” documentation that has come down to us.

After the “Glorious Revolution”, it was clear that regaining the crowns of Scotland and, more importantly, of England were James’s strategic aims. It is possible, that in the last period of his *de facto* reign in England and early time of his exile in France, James realised he had essentially lost the initiative to his more propaganda- aware son-in-law and that this had marshalled public opinion in England against him. Tellingly, the London premises of his own official printer, Henry Hills, were attacked on a number of occasions in November, allowing the populace to express their opinion of royally inspired publications.⁶³ It is no surprise therefore that when in exile in France the aim of producing Jacobite propaganda for consumption in England came to the fore.

⁶² Tony Claydon, *Europe and the Making of England, 1660/1760* (Cambridge, 2007). Lois G. Schwoerer, “Propaganda in the Revolution of 1688–89”, *American Historical Review*, vol.82 (October 1977), 843–874. David Hayton, “The Propaganda War” in W.A. Maguire (ed.), *Kings in Conflict* (Belfast, 1990).

⁶³ Harris, *Revolution*, p.297.

Jacobite Propaganda produced in France

Shortly after his arrival into exile in France James II met with Louis XIV and discussed plans for French expeditions to Ireland.⁶⁴ At the same time there was work done on the propaganda front to support this strategy. Evidence from the French diplomatic archives points to the Jacobites actively cooperating with the French to print propaganda pieces for distribution in the Three Kingdoms. In a letter to Colbert de Croissy, the French foreign minister from the police chief of Paris, Gabriel Nicholas de la Reynie (1625-1699) wrote that in accordance with permission from Louis XIV, Lord Melfort, James II's chief minister in exile, had appointed Mssrs, Martin & Boudot of Paris as their official printers.⁶⁵ The first document to be printed in English in Paris was a declaration by James of his reasons for leaving Rochester and going to France. That it was printed in English clearly earmarked it for for a target audience in England or Ireland.⁶⁶ Moreover the timing – start of February 1689 – is in line with French preparations for sending a Jacobite force to Ireland

There is ample reason to believe that the French were wary of allowing the Jacobites to use their printing presses. La Reynie states he had told the printers that for anything printed in English there should be a French translation brought to him for review.

This was not however the main object of the letter to Croissy.⁶⁷ La Reynie informed the minister that as he had instructed the printers to bring him any document submitted by the Jacobites the printers had shown him a second document Melfort had wanted printed. The content of this alarmed La Reynie who wrote to warn Croissy who having responsibility for foreign affairs would be able to communicate with Melfort. La Reynie informed Croissy that the content of the document attributed authority to the Pope to depose monarchs, even non-Catholics, should they be in disfavour with Rome. Whilst from a Jacobite point of view this clearly had William of Orange as a target, attributing such power to the Pope was not to French liking, not least because of Louis XIV's own very bad

⁶⁴ Symcox, Thesis, pp. 55-62

⁶⁵ La Reynie had supervision of the Parisian print shops. See Soll, *The Information Master: Jean-Baptiste Colbert's secret State intelligence system*, (Michigan, 2009) p.130.

⁶⁶ Gregg, 'France, Rome and the exiled Stuarts', p. 19. in Corp, *A Court in Exile*.

⁶⁷ AAE, CP, Angl. 170, f.6. Also cited by Burger, P., 'A study of the papers of the Abbé Eusèbe Renaudot', in Cruickshanks, E. (ed.) *Ideology and conspiracy: Aspects of Jacobitism, 1689-1759*, (Edinburgh, 1982)

relations with the Papacy of the time.⁶⁸ In fact La Reynie termed the subject “une question odieuse” which should not under any circumstances be printed in French for fear it would be distributed in France, With this kind of official attention it is unlikely this document saw any circulation in France.

Propaganda and James II in Ireland

By February 1689 events in England had gone beyond redemption, at least in the shorter term, with the coming to the throne of William and Mary. Nevertheless it seems likely the French wished to land James within one his former realms – Ireland - during some or all of the parliamentary debates in Scotland. The longer his presence in France endured — and as an extension his absence from Britain - the farther away a possible restoration must have seemed.

It was no doubt to the consternation of the newly ensconced regime in Britain that they discovered that their erstwhile monarch, profiting from the French quickness to react and sailing so early in the navigating season, had arrived in Ireland on 18th March 1689 and was in Dublin by 22nd. French naval forces had succeeded in putting him where many would have doubted it possible, catching the new king William III off guard.

With the arrival of King James and his supporters in Ireland in 1689 a key aim of theirs was to rectify the negative propaganda situation and reinforce his claims through informational channels. This would serve to both underline his *de facto* position in Ireland and to reinforce and project his continuing legitimacy as *de jure* sovereign into the rest of the Stuart realms. To this end, when in Dublin, and therefore possessing a foothold in one of his kingdoms, he ordered the production and dissemination of propaganda to further his claims. His supporters were able to avail themselves immediately of the existing printing infrastructure of Dublin, such as it was at the time, to have tracts, pamphlets and newsletters produced. Moreover they attempted through agents and adherents to transport these to Britain for distribution.

Despite James’s move to Ireland the French still attempted to keep some influence over what propaganda the Jacobites were producing. This is evident in correspondence between Louis XIV and his envoy to James in Ireland, the Comte d’Avaux. In a letter of 23 March 1689 Louis states that he had seen the letter James had had printed (probably in France given the timing) which was aimed at the Scottish convention. “*J’ai veu la lettre que le dit*

⁶⁸ Gregg, ‘France, Rome and the exiled Stuarts’, p. 17, in Corp, *A Court in Exile*.

*roy a escrit a la convention d'Escosse qui ne m'a pas paru assez persuasive pour ramener ceux qui composent cette assemblée a leur devoir."*⁶⁹

Louis suggested to d'Avaux that James needed to take a more moderate approach vis a vis his Scottish subjects, and to not antagonise those of the Protestant persuasion.

Furthermore as Louis had not seen another draft declaration, this time from James to his English subjects stating the reasons for his departure to Ireland, the French king asked d'Avaux to procure him a copy and send it back. If that letter had not already been printed Louis suggested alternative wording which he said he had given to Melfort and had enclosed in the letter to d'Avaux. Once he received it the French ambassador should show it to James "afin que le si le roy ne l'as pas encore escrit vous le puissiez disposer a le faire dans le sens dudit projet, sans neantmoins luy en faire des instances trop pressantes, si vous y trouvez queleque repugnance." Louis further suggested that other pro-Jacobite documents had been printed in France and he encloses the text of these. If d'Avaux feels any of these would be useful, he could write back to Louis who would have them printed in as many copies as required and sent to d'Avaux in Ireland for distribution.

In keeping with both French plans, as laid out in the instructions given to D'Avaux, and with James's own desires, his next target was Scotland.⁷⁰ As previously mentioned, the constitutional position of that kingdom was still ambiguous and a parliamentary-style Convention had been called in Edinburgh for April 1689.

Anxious to believe his ever-optimistic advisors, the Earl of Melfort chief among them, that Ireland was securely his, James turned his attentions to Scotland. Despite the unresolved issue of resistance at Derry, James no doubt believed that he would soon be able to transfer troops to the ancient Stuart realm. Resident in the Royal Castle of Dublin, he lost little time in writing letters to those Scottish nobles he believed loyal and which he had sent via trustworthy agents. The Williamite authorities were alive to the risk of correspondence from Ireland and looked to their officers and informants to prevent this. In fact, as early as in April 1689, information came to the ear of the Earl of Shrewsbury regarding a Jacobite

⁶⁹ Hogan, *Négociationss*, p. 168-9. Louis to d'Avaux, 23rd March 1689, countersigned Colbert (Croissy).

⁷⁰ Symcox, Thesis, p.70. Once it was decided that James was to lead the expedition to Ireland, and in agreement with Louis, James fully expected to pass over to Scotland and then to England. It was only with the Siege of Derry that these steps were postponed.

agent, Mr Brady, who had come from Ireland but “who had been arrested in Scotland in possession of many letters including some written by the late King James”.⁷¹

The correspondence at once advertised to those he thought loyal his presence in what he considered the least of his kingdoms, and requested their military support in the expected upcoming struggle.⁷² Also anxious to appeal to a wider audience, James issued a proclamation to his Scottish subjects at the start of May 1689 and did so using the services of Dublin printers. It was a formal declaration to rally to his cause and oppose the forces of William.

Examples of the document are preserved in Dublin and attest to the thinking of James as regards the realm of Scotland, seeking to appeal to a broad audience. It is addressed to “all our loving subjects”.⁷³ As to be expected, the language is forthright, but it also seeks to reassure Scots that despite his policy of religious toleration, the pre-eminent legal position of Protestantism would be secure on his restoration. In one example, by the wording of the royal title itself, “James the Seventh, by grace of God, King of Scotland, England and France”, the writer clearly sets out the audience James aimed at. It then immediately refers to the recent Scottish Convention, stating that its establishment was motivated by “men of pernicious principals and wicked designs”.

The proclamation situates the king in stating categorically that he did not believe in the legitimacy of even calling such a meeting as he had not sanctioned it, and that its aims were evident from the outset:

to call themselves the States of that Kingdom, and therein treasonably and wickedly to overthrow our Authority and to judge our proceedings and finally to dispose of our Imperial crown, which we hold from God alone.

In keeping with this sentiment it is not surprising that convinced Jacobites such as Sir John Graham of Claverhouse, better known as Bonnie Dundee, withdrew from the meetings, stating he did not recognise the gathering. The proclamation then appealed to Scottish financial self-interest. It claimed that as under the new regime Scottish people were being

⁷¹ CSP, Domestic, 1689–90, p.71.HMSO (London, 1895).

⁷² An example of one letter, addressed to the Earl of Balcarres, is preserved in the records of the Buccleuch family. HMC 54, Buccleuch papers 2i.

⁷³ NLI, Mss 1793 (99), formerly property of the Dukes of Ormonde, Other proclamations are on microfilm, pos. 8315, between f.407–419.

subjected to “heavy burthens, imprisonment and levies” they were justified in opposing the “unnatural usurper of our Royal Right, the Prince of Orange and his adherents”.

James clearly desired his supporters in Scotland to rally and openly oppose the new regime. Whatever military actions and attacks they inflicted upon their Williamite adversaries, he absolved them in advance through the proclamation by conferring his “indemnity, pardon, warrant and approbation”. Lastly, on matters religious, bearing in mind the specific religious composition of Scotland between Episcopalians, Dissenters and Catholics the exiled monarch moved to reassure his erstwhile subjects. He undertook to “make good to all our subjects all that we ever promised to them in any of our Royal declarations in favour of the Protestant Religion, Liberty of conscience to all who lie peaceably, and Rights, Liberty and Property of all our people”. The message ends with the statement that it was sealed by King James in Dublin Castle on 4 May 1689. It was also signed by Melfort, James’s secretary of State for Scotland. Considering Melfort’s reputation in Scotland, this was an injudicious move.⁷⁴

It should be noted that the proclamation was not the only example of propaganda James had sent to his northern realm. It does, however, underline that while in Dublin James had his expected move to Scotland in mind and was preparing the way in having it produced and printed in numbers. Examples of Scottish “domestic” propaganda — the word “propaganda” being used here in its modern meaning — also appear in at least one secondary work I consulted. Worth citing here is the scholarship of Mann, who has chronicled the existence of at least two documents produced in Scotland itself. These are the admittedly later publications entitled *Remonstrance and protestation against deposing James II* and *Ireland’s Glory*, the latter printed by a John Reid and described by Mann as “a tract blatantly critical of the [Williamite] government”.⁷⁵ Both these works were banned by order of the Scottish Privy council, in March and October 1691 respectively, although presumably they were circulating for some time before that.⁷⁶ It is interesting from the point of view of political history of the period to detail here that the John Reid mentioned

⁷⁴ G.H. Jones cites Dundee as saying that Melfort was so unpopular that his signature on a document from James II put “ten thousand swords out of the king’s way”: *The Main Stream of Jacobitism* (London, 1954), p.8. It is not clear if the document in question was this declaration.

⁷⁵ The square brackets are my own addition for clarification purposes. (Mann, p.152 & p.175.)

⁷⁶ Cited by Alistair J. Mann, *The Scottish Book Trade 1500–1720* (East Linton, 2000), pp.152, 175. When these first appeared I have not been able to ascertain.

had previously published Presbyterian and Covenanting material. As Mann implies, it would seem that commercial considerations regarding what might sell could just as easily have induced printers to publish pro-Jacobite ephemera, as distinct from any partisan political views they themselves might have held.

The printers in Dublin for the Scottish proclamation were Andrew Crook and his partner Samuel Helsham. They were Protestant and long-standing members of the organisation of Dublin stationers, the Guild of St Luke the Evangelist, founded about 1670. These businessmen produced many of James's other proclamations in Dublin, including the records of the so-called Patriot Parliament of 1689, which commenced soon after this proclamation was issued. Many other proclamations were issued on James's orders on specifically Irish items. These related to revaluations of the coinage, exhortations to farmers to supply James's army with corn and wheat, limits on the price of coal, and prohibitions on soldiers stealing horses from those members of the public who were allowed to keep them for their business. Suffice to say such items are propaganda only in the sense that they show an authority in existence, trying to direct affairs.

For the Scottish proclamation, it is difficult to gauge how large any print run might have been. This is because of the general paucity of records detailing the production of the this type of document, and the few surviving copies. What is certain is that the proclamation was for Scottish consumption and that James certainly had agents travelling there and adherents to distribute the papers. Whether it was ever on sale, or merely given out to sympathisers to post in taverns and public places, is a matter of some conjecture. The only thing that one can be almost certain of is that James had it printed and that he probably paid for it — though perhaps with French silver.

At some point in later 1689, another printer comes to the fore in Dublin in the shape of Alderman James Malone. A Roman Catholic, he had been admitted to the Guild in 1672 and had been in the business of printing Catholic devotional works. Perhaps in a deliberate move by King James's pro-Catholic advisors to favour a co-religionist, or equally plausibly, even because of more competitive commercial considerations, Malone and his associates started to appear as the main printers of Jacobite proclamations and by 1690 most Jacobite printings were done by him.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Mary Pollard, *A Dictionary of the Members of the Dublin Book Trade, 1550–1800*, (Oxford UP, 2000), p.130. There are apocryphal tales stating that Crooke, perhaps a

As the war progressed, these were not the only documents to see the light of day, and so other propaganda opportunities arose. One of these targets was enticing soldiers in the opponent's armies to desert. This was the case for a document done by James Malone in the second half of 1689, a pamphlet entitled aimed at the forces of Marshall Schomberg who had arrived in Ulster in August: "*A Letter to the Officers and Soldiers of his Majesties Subjects that are in the Count de Schomberg's Army*".⁷⁸

The first line of the document cuts to the chase in inviting any soldier in the Williamite force to change allegiance. Whether Malone was instrumental in copywriting as well as in printing is unknown, but the tone suggests one versed in engaging prose: "Next to the honour of never engaging in a bad cause, there is nothing braver than to desert it."⁷⁹

It is difficult to gauge at so far a remove from the events of the time whether these plays had much success, but an admittedly biased reference in a later Malone publication indicates they might have. While such tracts or pamphlets were destined for an audience in Ireland, and were no doubt supported if not directly ordered by James's closest adherents, they were nonetheless mindful of the wider need for production of pro-Jacobite writings in the more important audience of English public opinion especially. To this end, James's secretary of State, Lord Melfort, wrote from Dublin to the French foreign minister, Colbert de Croissy, in June 1689, requesting financial support. In England he states that

the king's servants who have managed the printing and distribution of papers written against the Prince of Orange have spent £10,000 of their funds already and ask for more.⁸⁰

The Jacobite printers in London, he pleads, had already sold all their silver plate in an effort to finance their activities. Melfort, knowing that James would be very reliant on French finances if he was to be restored militarily, argues that the printers work was an essential one and asked that the French reimburse the funds. This could be done he

Williamite at heart, always delayed the printing of publications desired by James II in Dublin and this was the reason for his replacement by Malone.

⁷⁸ Simms, *Jacobite Ireland*, p.121. Referenced by Robert Munter, *History of the Irish Newspaper, 1685–1760* (Cambridge, 1967).

⁷⁹ Cited by Munter, *History of the Irish Newspaper*, p.122. The Jacobite non-juror, Charles Leslie, did write propaganda documents in 1692, but I have not found any evidence for or against whether he was involved in writing earlier publications. (See Simms, *Jacobite Ireland*, p.276.)

⁸⁰ AAE, CP, Angleterre, 170, f.98

suggested via letters of change which the French could send, covertly one assumes, to members of the Jacobite Waldegrave family in London.

Whether the French themselves advised the Jacobites continually in producing propaganda is not something I have looked at here. Klaitis states that the French government's own propaganda machine was largely abandoned from the early 1670s to virtually the end of the War of the League of Augsburg. Hayton in his essay does show French anti-Williamite prints of 1690 related to Ireland.⁸¹ However, if the Earl of Tyrconnell's comments are correct, the Jacobites had little faith in the French themselves being able to produce any propaganda publications they could use, primarily due to "the little knowledge they have of the king's affaires, as well as that of the three kingdoms".⁸²

The possibilities for a domestic English centre of Jacobite propaganda working to undermine King William's position were probably to the fore in the concerns of Daniel Finch (1647–1730), 2nd Earl of Nottingham and Secretary of State under the joint monarchs. In England, the new regime was mindful of these tactics and from the quotation above had probably seen the fruits of the Jacobites' printing presses. The office of the Secretary of State had control of the state security and intelligence apparatus, as indeed it had for dissemination of government news through its own organ, the *London Gazette*.⁸³ As Marshall states their responsibilities included "interception of mail at the Post Office, the seizure of papers or individuals by warrant, the suppression of the printing and distribution of seditious material and the interrogation of suspects."⁸⁴

It is not surprising that the reference is to printed matter for England, given that was James's target audience, those whom he had to win back, to convince he had their interests at heart. His Irish Catholic subjects were already in his wake and in any case knew he was probably their best, or perhaps, only prospect for greater recognition, liberty of conscience and chances for advancement. Paradoxically, the very fact that James was being supported by Irish Catholics was probably his biggest political liability, after his own religious convictions, in the eyes of his erstwhile English subjects.

⁸¹ Joseph Klaitis, *Printed Propaganda under Louis XIV: Absolute Monarchy and Public Opinion* (Princeton, 1976), p.87. On p.94 he says that the "few" efforts in the period were directed at Germany. Hayton, 'Propaganda War' p.110.

⁸² Tate, *Letterbook*, p.106, Tyrconnell to the Queen, 22 December 1689 (old style.).

⁸³ Alan Marshall, *Intelligence and Espionage*, p.30.

⁸⁴ Marshall, *Intelligence and Espionage*, p.30.

In his edition of the Jacobite history of the war in Ireland, written by Jacobite soldier Colonel Charles O'Kelly, O'Callaghan relates how under James's rule in Ireland there was a news sheet published under the name of *Dublin Gazette* which gave information, albeit of an officially approved nature, on Jacobite military undertakings in Ireland.⁸⁵ He further alleges that some of these were transported to Scotland for distribution, no doubt to encourage James's party there.⁸⁶

Even before his master's arrival in Ireland towards the end of March, London sources alleged that James's Lord Deputy Richard Talbot, Earl of Tyrconnell, made use of printing in Dublin to influence opinion. In a pamphlet originating in London from early 1689, and entitled in a way as to reveal its leanings, *An Account of the Present Miserable State in Ireland*, it was claimed that Tyrconnell had made some efforts to manage information in the kingdom's capital, stating that mail from England had been interrupted and that in Dublin there "is no public news letter nor Gazette suffered to be in any coffee house, only the Dublin Gazette which is a legend in its own composition."⁸⁷

The strategy, if that is what it was, appears to have been two-fold: to restrict the importation and distribution of London news sheets, and to allow only the existing Dublin publication to circulate, which was closer at hand and therefore easier to control. Whatever the actual political leanings of the *Dublin Gazette*, it was clearly not to the taste of the author of the London tract. Certainly, Hayton has catalogued a large number of Williamite publications printed in London in 1689–1690 covering all manner of anti-Jacobite and anti-French themes, such as purported massacres and the subversion of the Protestant religion.⁸⁸ It is difficult to say how many of these found their way to Ireland, although some must have. Perhaps the Jacobite printing efforts in Dublin were designed to counter these.

Munter in his 1967 work cast doubt on the existence of the Jacobite *Dublin Gazette*, citing it as conjecture. The reason was that no copies had survived to his knowledge, although he did think it possible some news sheets were circulating. He states that if they did exist, they might have been either a continuation of the *Dublin News letter*, which had been founded by Dublin bookseller Robert Thornton about 1685 and printed by Joseph Ray's press.

⁸⁵ Cornelius O'Callaghan (ed.) *The Destruction of Cyprus, or A Secret History of the War of the Revolution in Ireland* (Dublin, 1850), p.164–165.

⁸⁶ O'Callaghan, p.165–166.

⁸⁷ Cited in Simms, *Jacobite Ireland*, p.54.

⁸⁸ D.W. Hayton, *Ruling Ireland 1685–1742: Politics, Politicians and Parties* (Rochester NY, 2004), p.21.

Perhaps O’Callaghan was confusing the late 1690 Williamite publication of the *Dublin Gazette* and had assumed it had started earlier, under the patronage of James II. In my own research, I have discovered that there are some extant copies of this Jacobite-inspired *Dublin Gazette*, which as yet I have not been able to see but appear to date from early 1690 and were printed by Malone.⁸⁹ It is not certain how many editions of these were produced, and whether consistently or sporadically. Whatever the circulation, Munter succinctly states the motivation behind such a publication was “not solely as a vehicle for announcements and decrees but in order to challenge the enemy, expose false rumours and in short furnish supporters with an official view.”⁹⁰

A different type of Jacobite propaganda piece was printed in late 1689, again under the auspices of James Malone, relating to King James’s campaign in the Ulster marches against forces commanded by Marshall Schomberg. This concentrated on the advances made by Jacobite forces and denigrated the less than impressive efforts of the Williamite force.

A Relation of what most Remarkably happened during the Last Campaign in Ireland betwixt His Majesties’ Army Royal, and the Forces of the Prince of Orange, sent to Joyn the Rebels, under the Command of the Count de Schomberg, / Published by Authority / Dublin, printed for Alderman James Malone, Bookseller in Skinner-Row, 1689.

According to the pamphlet, efforts to attract deserters from Schomberg’s forces prompted both James and D’Avaux to issue declarations calling on all to join his own forces, and “embrace the Justice of his Quarrel against them”. The tract alleges that Schomberg felt he was unable to rely on his own troops who had heard these proclamations. As other exhortations to desert had also been received, namely

several Notes dispersed to the purpose there of, throughout his camp, he thought himself obliged more to guard himself against the growing dangers in his own army, than to think of advancing any further against the King’s.⁹¹

⁸⁹ They are referred to at www.Estc.bl.uk, citation no.p. 6658. My thanks are due to Sue Hemmings, librarian at Marsh’s Library in Dublin, who alerted me to this source. The extant copies are in the Cambridge University Library and the Library Company of Philadelphia and appear to date to 1690.

⁹⁰ Munter, *History of the Irish Newspaper*, p.13.

⁹¹ *A relation of what most remarkably happened...*, NLI, Dix collection, Dublin, 1689–1691, p.10. (Call number: Dublin 1689-1).

The copywriter was also anxious to boost the morale of the Jacobite side, stating that no doubt Schomberg had encouraged his troops with promises of spoil and profit in Dublin, intending to “divide among them, as Cromwel had done, the possessions and inheritances of the Loyal party”.⁹²

What actually transpired was grist to the Jacobite mill. Schomberg’s force, decimated by sickness and lacking forage, withdrew from Louth northwards to Belfast, having declined James’s offer of battle, which the author said brought shame on a previously successful commander:

The mighty expectations of the Great Schomberg, and his Rebellious adherents, being thus defeated ... to the loss of that Honour and Reputation which he had been so many years acquiring ... with the weak remainder of his Army ... being diminisht much above one half, by extream Sickness.⁹³

Schomberg’s military failure, exacerbated by inefficient supply lines and low-quality equipment was needless to say embarrassing to King William.⁹⁴ However inglorious Schomberg’s efforts, there is clearly a Jacobite desire to highlight the positives in view of their own fiasco at Derry. Although primarily concerned with discrediting Schomberg, the publication also refers to other military successes by “Loyal forces” of King James against Ulster rebels at Sligo, Charlemont Fort in Co. Armagh, and Ardee.

Whoever produced this publication included many interesting statements and claims to bolster the Jacobite cause and enhance the reputation of key figures in that establishment. One of those singled out for praise was Tyrconnell, “whose zeal and fidelity to the Crown in the worst of times can hardly in history find their parallel”.

The state of the City of Dublin itself was the occasion to laud the achievements of another grandee, which for a commercial venture was a chance not to be missed. Perhaps to counter Williamite propaganda regarding some partisan treatment of Dublin Protestants and rumours of maladministration in the city, the author felt it warranted to state

⁹² *A relation of what most remarkably happened...*, p.15.

⁹³ *A relation of what most remarkably happened...*, p.14.

⁹⁴ Simms, *Jacobite Ireland*, p.121. The army commissary at the time, Mr Shales in Chester, was suspected of being a Catholic and sympathiser of the Jacobite cause. A notable embarrassment was the delivery of many broken muskets.

that the City was so well managed, that it remained still in perfect Peace, by the great Care and Conduct of the Honourable Simon Luttrell, Collonel of Dragoons, and Governour of the Place, where by his prudence he had so well ordered every thing, that no attempts from abroad, or from any Faction within the City, could produce any Mischief, or give the Enemy any advantage.⁹⁵

The tract ends on a positive note for Jacobites, mentioning how Justin McCarthy, Lord Mountcashel, who had been captured by Ulster Williamites at Enniskillen, had managed to carry out a daring escape and had returned to Dublin.⁹⁶ Having “[m]ost ingeniously wrought his own deliverance from his confinement at Iniskilling ... he was very kindly received by the King with a hearty Welcome... Tuesday 17th of December”. It is worth considering for a moment here the dating of the document. The tract carries a printed date of 1689 on the cover sheet. The last event specifically dated is Mountcashel’s return on 17 December, presumably using old-style dating. In this calendar the start of 1690 would have been Lady Day, 25 March. So it is possible the actual date of printing might have been between December and March.

There is, however, one other element worth considering. In the document there is a reference to an English raid on Dublin Bay, which the author said was successfully repulsed: “Tis true that their Ships came to an Anchor in Dublin-road, and that they began to land some men.”⁹⁷ Despite this attack on an unexpected front, the calling out of the Jacobite Dublin militia “soon obliged them to retire to their ships, which then immediately put to sea”. While it is possible there were a number of raids by Royal Navy ships attacking Dublin, the only one that has come down in the accepted histories is that carried out by a small force under Sir Cloudesley Shovell. Using a frigate and yacht, the English force managed to steal back a Scottish prize frigate, *Pelican*, before making good their escape in front of a large crowd on the shoreline. This vessel had previously been captured by French frigates off the coast of Scotland in 1689. The date generally given for Shovell’s exploit is late April 1690.⁹⁸ The event was so embarrassing to the Jacobites, and widely known in Dublin and abroad, that it could not have been ignored in such a Dublin

⁹⁵ *A relation of what most remarkably happened...*, p.12.

⁹⁶ Simms, *Jacobite Ireland*, p.138.

⁹⁷ *A relation of what most remarkably happened...*, p.11.

⁹⁸ Simms, *Jacobite Ireland*, p.137, states that the raid was reported in the *London Gazette* of 25 April 1690, (o.s.).

publication, although perhaps some poetic licence was taken with the facts as regards exact dating.

Jacobite Propaganda in Britain

Overall, this document's importance and propaganda value is certainly noteworthy at one level as an example of Jacobite propaganda that relates to military success in Ireland.

Interestingly, it was evidently considered at the time to have been worth distributing to a wider audience, and to this end it appeared in England in 1690, relatively quickly after its publication. The English authorities seem to have been alive to this, however, as the Calendar of State Papers for 17 April (o.s.) records the issuance of a warrant

to apprehend --- Pool, a bookseller, John Mullett, Benjamin Molson, William Haskar, John Quinney and John Shutter, for printing and publishing scandalous and seditious pamphlets entitled 'a relation of what most remarkably happened during the last campaign in Ireland' as well as 'the Abhorrence, or Protestant observations in Dublin, upon the principles and practices of the Protestants at London'.⁹⁹

It is tempting to think that the person named Pool and his/her associates are the Jacobite printers in England referred to above by Melfort in his letter to France. There are, however, other possible candidates to consider. Nottingham, as Secretary of State, had agents working at the London post office to identify any suspicious letters and to be on the lookout for anti-government publications. Again, the state papers record government activities in this area, when in late May 1689 the authorities issued a

warrant to Arthur Clum, of the General Letter Office, to search for treasonable and seditious printed libels, books and papers, about the persons, and in the chambers, and warehouses of all carriers, waggoners, and pack-horse men and hagglers, now on the western roads.¹⁰⁰

This, coupled with the joint efforts to intercept correspondence between known or suspected Jacobites, led to a number of messages being stopped, investigated and decoded. In October 1689, one recipient was identified as a Mr William Canning, stationer in the Middle Temple, London. This led to a warrant for his apprehension on a charge of publishing seditious news about the king and government.

⁹⁹ CSP, Domestic, 1689–1690, p.559–560.

¹⁰⁰ CSP, Domestic, 1689–1690, p.121.

How much effect pro-Jacobite newsletters and printed papers coming into England had upon the local literate populace is difficult to judge. In a letter to Lord Shrewsbury written in June 1689, Lord Brandon, stationed at Ormskirk near Bolton, seems to doubt their effectiveness. “There are abundance of the late King’s declarations sent into the country, but they make no impression upon anybody.”¹⁰¹

On 12 July 1690, Nottingham wrote to Lord Brandon, who had been patrolling the northern Welsh Coast up to and beyond Chester in search of boats coming from Ireland. Nottingham told him that “The Queen has information that one Tootell, who keeps a coffee house in Wigan, is furnished with letters of false news defaming the government.” Despite this, for reasons unstated, the mayor of the town could not be persuaded to intervene: “Her Majesty would therefore have your lordship suppress the news-letter and punish the offenders and prosecute the author.”¹⁰²

The reference to coffee houses is one that appears in a number of reports. As Hayton states, even in semi-literate societies, newspapers and news sheets were often read out aloud in such establishments and other meeting places, so that even those who could not read were still able to listen and thereafter spread news by word of mouth.¹⁰³ The sample references above to printers in England publishing anti-government papers and other indications that James had sent agents to England with papers could both go to explain the existence of a certain volume of “seditious” printings circulating in Britain. It would be hard to discern whether they had come from Ireland or originated in Britain. Whatever their origin, the English authorities felt obliged to go further and persuade the printers themselves to act in support of the government. On 21 July 1690 (o.s.), Nottingham wrote to the Company of Stationers, the guild in London responsible for licenced printers, reminding them that under a recent Act of Parliament they were obliged to keep their presses under due care, because there were “several scandalous and seditious books and pamphlets frequently published to the great disturbance of the peace of their Majesty’s government”.¹⁰⁴ Moreover, he enjoined upon them to act in accordance with the new law and to “make often and diligent searches in all such places you or any of you shall know or have any probably reason to suspect and to seize all unlicensed, scandalous books and pamphlets.” In all these searches,

¹⁰¹ CSP, Domestic, 1689–1690, p.167.

¹⁰² CSP, Domestic, William & Mary 1690–1691, p. 64, HMSO, London, 1898

¹⁰³ Hayton, “The Propaganda War”, pp.120–121.

¹⁰⁴ CSP, Domestic, 1690-1691, , p. 74.

the printers were obliged to be accompanied by the “messenger of the press”, in effect a clerk employed by Nottingham’s own office.

In February 1691, Henry Viscount Sidney felt obliged to write to the Mayor of London complaining of a number of individuals who were described as “[s]editious newsmongers and incendiaries” who were gathering in City coffee houses. The mayor was encouraged to advise magistrates and justices of the peace in the various municipal districts to proceed against these individuals who purposely gathered there

to spread false and seditious reports, and to inveigh against the present Government, to the great discouragement and scandal of all their Majesties’ subjects, which if not timely prevented, may prove of very dangerous consequence.

Whether these persons were Jacobite agents or merely sympathisers is hard to tell. Clearly, this was an ongoing problem for the government authorities in a time of war, despite any exhortations to freedom of speech.¹⁰⁵

In summary, therefore, it can be stated that Jacobite printers and writers were evidently active both in Ireland and in Britain. In Ireland for a period they had the “imprimatur” of royal authority (albeit deposed) for as long as James was in power and so were able to produce news sheets and pamphlets to further their cause. These publications had some sort of circulation in England. Other Jacobite groups were active in England and Scotland producing other material. In Ireland, however, this ended with the victory of King William at the Battle of the Boyne at the start of July 1690. Alderman James Malone’s last proclamation printed for King James is dated 15 June and related to an attempt to fix exchange rates between French and Spanish gold coins and Jacobite brass and copper coinage, the so-called gun money. Malone, whose career had prospered with James’s patronage, became *persona non grata* to the new regime. While it is possible that Malone or others might have also have produced the satirical illustrations so popular at the time, I have not found documentary evidence either for or against. As Hayton says, the real masters of the lampooning prints were the Dutch, so perhaps the skills might not have been available. The fleeting reference in French correspondence to an engraver, a certain Monsieur Hupiere, being sent over to Ireland along with his two boy assistants in early 1690 is perhaps more likely to relate to the production of the gun money rather than propaganda, although it is tempting to think he could have produced pro-Jacobite images

¹⁰⁵ CSP, Domestic, 1690-1691, p. 263.

too.¹⁰⁶ In this tale of Jacobite propaganda, the French are generally quite absent — perhaps understandably, given the language issues — unless of course they were the silent business partner, funding the enterprise.

Unsurprisingly, when King William and his forces landed in Ireland, he brought a loyal printer with him, Edward Jones from London, who brought his own printing press. It was Jones who printed Williamite proclamations in Dublin in later months of 1690 while the king was with the army.¹⁰⁷ Once William had departed to England, Jones went with him. Andrew Crooke was again appointed as “Printer to His King’s Majesty in Dublin” and served for a number of years. His name appears on the editions of the Ascendancy Parliament’s anti-Catholic Penal Laws from around 1692 onwards. In an example of what were very changed times, the *Dublin Gazette* newspaper re-appeared in September 1690 under publisher Robert Thornton. In stark contrast to the works of James Malone, Munter describes it as “vehemently Protestant and staunchly Williamite”.¹⁰⁸

James Malone also managed to continue a career in Dublin. In keeping with his former sympathies, he had many interactions with the authorities on account of his religious and political views. Ejected from the Printers Guild in 1696, his opponents at the time stated he had been a “captain, commissioner of array, and printer to the late King James” during the war. He is further alleged to have seized the printing press of another Dublin craftsman, Joseph Ray, and to have “published seditious libels”.¹⁰⁹ His troubles in 1696 resulted from his activities as a “promoter and trader in Popish books”. He was subsequently reinstated as a “freeman” in 1700. These infractions with the government seem not to have deterred him, and he remained active in publishing. In 1703 he again came to the attention of the Dublin authorities by putting his name to an edition of the *Memoirs of James the Second*, which he had printed and for which he was arrested and questioned.¹¹⁰ In his defence, he was able to prove he was not the originator of the text, as it had previously been printed in London, so he escaped with a heavy fine but was not incarcerated.

Printed bills and news sheets fall into the category of ephemera, and so relatively few originals from this period in Ireland have survived to our time. Those having done so are

¹⁰⁶ Mulloy, *Franco-Irish Correspondence*, vol.I, p.19 (A1, 960).

¹⁰⁷ Pollard, *A Dictionary of the Members of the Dublin Book Trade*, p.321.

¹⁰⁸ Cited in Munter, *History of the Irish Newspaper*, p.14.

¹⁰⁹ Pollard, *A Dictionary of the Members of the Dublin Book Trade*, p.395. Jones was the printer for the *London Gazette* in this period. An example of this is in the French archives, which a French agent in England had sent over. AAE, CP, Ang. 170, f.123.

¹¹⁰ Pollard, *Dictionary of the Members of the Dublin Book Trade*, p.396.

almost always Williamite in tone and content. The wording of many Dublin proclamations of James II have been preserved in some sources, such as the Stuart papers and Ormonde volumes (HMC). Some other copies survive in French records as they were included in D'Avaux's correspondence back to France in the period 1689-90. Few examples of Jacobite propaganda publications, either pamphlets, news sheets or tracts have survived, not least because with the Williamite victory these were "seditious", the possession of which would put the bearer at considerable risk if discovered.

Clearly therefore printing such tracts was both an expensive and risky task. The consequences of being found out producing, transporting or even possessing such work were grave indeed. The victors in any case were clearly not interested in having anti-establishment papers circulate. At the end of the day, however, Jacobite propaganda was fighting an uphill battle. The "Glorious Revolution" had proved that James II's policies were not in tune with the majority of his subjects, the greater portion of whom were Anglican. The fact that James had such support from Catholic Ireland and France was a serious liability in their eyes, and so damaged his image still further.¹¹¹ The British establishment, moreover, was able to harness the infinitely greater infrastructure of the London print houses for their own ends to produce government publications and volumes of popular anti-Catholic tracts. As Mann says, "Whig Anti-Jacobite propaganda was overwhelmingly printed in London, which signifies the attempt at centralised information control by English ministers".¹¹² In the end, the Jacobite volumes were probably too small, and in any case they did not catch the popular mood where James wanted to be popular.

Conclusion

At the beginning of the conflict the French tried to assist in the production of Jacobite propaganda but they were not always happy with its content. With the establishment of the Jacobite regime in Dublin however the emphasis for production shifted directly under Jacobite control. James II's supporters produced a newspaper in Dublin and many promotional pamphlets, some of which they tried to distribute in Scotland and England. There the Williamite regime made great efforts to suppress this printed dissent. In the end however the tide was against James II and his adherents. Despite French assistance more than because of it, Jacobites were ultimately unsuccessful in their propaganda endeavours.

¹¹¹ Hayton, "The Propaganda War", p.121.

¹¹² Mann, *The Scottish Book Trade*, p.150.

This appears to be a case of the message not being to the liking of their target audience as much as to the state's efforts in England and Scotland to shut down the sources.

CHAPTER III – THE GUISES OF DIPLOMACY: TWO FRENCH ENVOYS IN IRELAND

Introduction: The Comte D’Avaux and the Abbé de Gravel

At the start of the War of the League of Augsburg, the France of Louis XIV had few friends. One ally, by force of circumstance, was a monarch without a kingdom, the exiled James II. In February 1689, the decision was taken for James to lead an expedition to Ireland with French support. To assist James and to ensure French interests were protected, it was decided to send a loyal and experienced diplomat to advise him.¹¹³ Louis’s choice fell on capable shoulders: the experienced and respected Comte D’Avaux, Jean-Antoine de Mesmes (1640-1709). Although he was the most important French diplomat in Ireland during the campaign, he was not the only one. The other was the Abbé de Gravel, also experienced, but acting in an obscure capacity.

Overall, this chapter aims to show what sorts of information were provided by the diplomats about the situation on the ground in Ireland. This was the information ministers such as Louvois, Colbert de Croissy and Seignelay had at their disposal, among other sources. It was this type of data, once analysed, that French government decision-making for Ireland was based on.¹¹⁴ The first section of the chapter deals with D’Avaux and the second with Abbé de Gravel.

In wartime, intelligence and information are essential for decision-makers in both strategic and tactical decision-making. The French government at Versailles, with forces in Ireland in 1689–1691, was trying to direct a campaign in a theatre many hundreds of kilometres away. To this end, all of Louis XIV’s ministers requested that all their subordinates operating in Ireland, be they diplomats, army commissaries or engineers, write back informing their respective ministers concerning their activities and the state of the country as they saw and heard about it. D’Avaux and Gravel exemplify the sorts of figures deployed by the French government to supply it with crucial information. D’Avaux acted in an official, quite defined diplomatic and advisory role, while Gravel was a functionary

¹¹³ Symcox, *Thesis*, p.67 considers the decision for James to lead the expedition to Ireland was taken in February 1689. The original plan seems to have been for a small diversion of limited scope, with James’s illegitimate son, the young Duke of Berwick, nominally in command.

¹¹⁴ As will be shown in a following chapter about Lauzun, the French government did not necessarily choose the best information to base their decisions on, e.g. court politics and influence.

of lower social status in a more ambiguous but equally vital role. The division between the two, of seniority and historical notoriety, is reflected in the archival material and scholarship done. Not surprisingly, there is much more on D'Avaux than on the lesser-known Gravel. This neglect of Gravel merits correction in terms of the Irish campaign.

D'Avaux: An example of a French ambassador of the 17th century

As king, Louis XIV needed to have every confidence that his ally James II received the best advice and that the person supplying that to him was dependable, experienced and loyal. The Comte D'Avaux was all these things. Before starting on the detail of D'Avaux in Ireland, it is worth setting the scene by looking at the context of diplomacy in the age of the Sun King and related historiography.

Some recent scholarship on the history of diplomacy in the early modern period has focused on French diplomacy as a model to be studied in depth, including as it does those serving the great 17th-century figures of France, such as Richelieu, Mazarin and Louis XIV. Roosen is one example, while O'Connor and Rule are others.¹¹⁵ Another notable historian is Bély, who has done considerable work on events around the Peace of Utrecht in 1713.

The secretary in charge of foreign affairs during the Irish campaign was Charles Colbert, Marquis de Croissy (1625–1696). He was a brother to the famous Jean-Baptiste Colbert and uncle to Colbert de Seignelay, secretary of the Navy. Although he started his career as an army *intendant* in Alsace and Flanders, he gradually moved into the diplomatic sphere.¹¹⁶ After participating as a negotiator at talks leading to the Treaty of Aix la Chapelle, he was posted as ambassador to the England of Charles II. In 1679, he was in Munich to discuss the marriage of the Dauphin to the daughter of the Elector of Bavaria. It was from there that he was recalled and named as secretary for foreign affairs.

Although ostensibly his promotion was a result of intrigue between the Le Tellier and Colbert clans against the incumbent foreign secretary, Simon Arnould de Pomponne, this is

¹¹⁵ William Roosen, "The Functioning of Ambassadors under Louis XIV", in *French Historical Studies* (Spring 1970), 311–332. See also his book, *Louis XIV and the Rise of Modern Diplomacy* (Cambridge MA, 1976). John T. O'Connor, "Diplomatic History of the Reign" in P. Sonnino (ed.), *The Reign of Louis XIV* (Atlantic Highlands, 1990), pp.143–158.

¹¹⁶ See article on Croissy by Jean Berenger in François Bluche (ed.), *Dictionnaire du Grande Siècle* (Paris, 1990), pp.434–436.

not the full story.¹¹⁷ From a historiographical point of view, Croissy's incumbency is associated with the expansionist "reunions" policy of 1679–1684. The origin of this policy of legalistic annexations of territory in Alsace and Lorraine was a strategic desire to rationalise France's eastern borders and make them more defensible.¹¹⁸ The king had decided this needed to be done but did not feel that the conciliatory Pomponne would pursue this with the vigour expected. Croissy was recognised as having a harder, more aggressive character more in the mould of a Louvois. It is difficult to accept therefore that Croissy was appointed to foreign affairs merely due to intrigue. Whatever the king was, he was not merely an actor in his own government; he was the orchestrator.¹¹⁹

The new, more expansionist policies are commented on by many historians of diplomacy. O'Connor contributed a succinct paper in Paul Sonnino's collection of essays on the interplay between diplomatic overtures, money and the wars of the reign, underlining how much less cautious Louis was than Mazarin in dealing with allies.¹²⁰ Wolf says the policy of the reunions and the associated occupations by French troops were viewed by the onlooking European countries as a mix of "violence and usurpation", executed by Louis's willing ministers acting in tandem.¹²¹ The tenure of Colbert de Croissy (1679–1696) is also remembered, along with his son Colbert de Torcy (1696–1715), who succeeded him, as having greatly elaborated the administration of the foreign affairs secretariat. As Rule points out, the department went from being a small administrative family to that of a bureaucratic machine, although the clientage was still evident from the small number of the same families from which *commis* were drawn.¹²²

Another aspect Croissy brought in was personally drafting instructions to travelling French envoys, whatever their grade, and being the only secretary empowered to receive foreign ambassadors. To some extent, this reflected the new ministerial reality in France, where Croissy was anxious to retain complete control of foreign affairs under the king. He wished to avoid the habits of the past, where secretaries for other areas had more influence on

¹¹⁷ Wolf, Louis XIV, p.496.

¹¹⁸ Symcox, "The Outbreak of the Nine Years War" (1976), pp.180–181.

¹¹⁹ Roosen, *Louis XIV and the Rise of Modern Diplomacy*, p.38.

¹²⁰ O'Connor, "Diplomatic History of the Reign", p.151.

¹²¹ Wolf, Louis XIV, p.501.

¹²² John Rule, *The Commis of the Department of Foreign Affairs under Colbert de Croissy and Colbert de Torcy*, *Proceedings of the Western Society for French History*, no.8 (1981), p.75. Rule states that by 1688 Croissy was dictating the instructions to ambassadors to scribes due to his arthritis.

foreign affairs. Louvois was a case in point, not least because he had acted as caretaker secretary in 1679 between Pomponne's departure and Croissy's return to Paris.

A number of scholars concentrate on the more important envoys, sometimes in the context of a major treaty such as Westphalia, Ryswick and Utrecht. Bély's opus widens the scope of the scholarly research by including the analysis of lower-level diplomats, such as *chargés de mission* on less important postings, or members of the secretarial staff travelling in the suite of more illustrious envoys. Although Bély's book is beyond my scope, one could use his classification and see the Abbé de Gravel as an example of this second tier of envoy.¹²³ Most scholars agree that envoys in this period, aside from their purely diplomatic functions engaging with the government of the posting busied themselves in gathering information useful to the home country, a characteristic one might say not obviously confined to the seventeenth century. This data could have been of a political, commercial or military nature. Even if ambassadors themselves, often at post in hostile territories and vulnerable to close supervision, did not engage in espionage directly, Bély argues that others under cover of a large entourage probably did.¹²⁴

On D'Avaux's career specifically, there are a number of relevant secondary works. Most, however, are not concerned with Ireland in this period and so neglect D'Avaux's actions there. In his survey of *louisquatorzien* diplomacy, Roosen gives details of D'Avaux's early postings and cites him as a good example of the type of individual active in the diplomatic corps at the time. He underlines both his *robe* origins and the relative importance of family links in recruitment.¹²⁵

Regarding Irish historiography, many of the standard texts already cited in Chapter 1 deal with D'Avaux's actions in Ireland. Simms is the most comprehensive, with Pillorget and Hayton, among others, giving good overviews.¹²⁶ Hayton underlines James's essentially "English" attitude in trying to avoid concessions to his Irish subjects.¹²⁷ All have relied on Hogan's excellent edition of D'Avaux's correspondence and its useful introductory

¹²³ Bély, *Espions et Ambassadeurs au temps de Louis XIV* (2002),

¹²⁴ Although thematically relevant, Bély's main opus concentrates on the later period of the reign of Louis XIV leading to the Peace of Utrecht in 1713, which ended the War of the Spanish Succession.

¹²⁵ Roosen, *Louis XIV and the Rise of Modern Diplomacy*, pp.68-70.

¹²⁶ Simms, *Jacobite Ireland*, René Pillorget, "Ireland and Louis XIV" in B. Whelan (ed.), *The Last of the Great Wars: Essays on the War of the Three Kings in Ireland 1688–1691* (Limerick, 1995).

¹²⁷ Hayton, *Ruling Ireland, 1685–1742*, pp.19–21.

chapter.¹²⁸ What they do not deal with, though, is D’Avaux’s correspondence back to France and the way he related to powerful ministers there.

D’Avaux was appointed Louis XIV’s ambassador to James II when he departed for Ireland in March 1689. Like many others in the diplomatic circle, D’Avaux was a member of a *noblesse de robe* family. His uncle Claude de Mesmes, also Comte D’Avaux, was a lawyer by training. He worked as a diplomat during the Thirty Years War and was a French negotiator at the Peace of Westphalia.¹²⁹ The young Jean-Antoine got his first posting as resident envoy in Venice in 1672, was one of the French negotiators for the Treaty of Nijmegen and then became France’s envoy to the Dutch Republic for almost ten years. During that time, he was seen as an ally of Dutch republicans who struggled to restrict the powers of the House of Orange.¹³⁰ He was ironically the envoy during the time of William of Orange’s preparations for the “Glorious Revolution” during 1688 and sent warnings to Louis of the build-up of forces. This term must have given him considerable insight into the mindset of William III, and so he was a sound choice as advisor to James.

By the time of his posting to Ireland, D’Avaux was a highly experienced and respected “career diplomat”. As one contemporary described him,

Monsieur d’Avaux is a true genius, and is very good tempered; he takes the large perspective, has much shrewdness and great experience in public affairs. He understands perfectly the interests of the princes of Europe and he writes and speaks well.¹³¹

To Louis, D’Avaux must have appeared almost the perfect choice as ambassador to an important though difficult ally. To assist the diplomat in his mission Louis gave him official accreditation papers as *ambassadeur extraordinaire* to the English Royal Court.¹³² Louis explained to D’Avaux that the formal letters would tell everyone who and what he was, an important representative of their powerful ally. In one sense, this bolstered James’s claim to be still a *de facto* ruler, not just *de jure*. Moreover, for Louis his armed

¹²⁸ James Hogan (ed.), *Négotiations de M. le Comte d’Avaux en Irlande 1689–1690* (Dublin, 1934). Supplementary Volume, IMC, 1958. Symcox has clearly used Hogan’s introduction extensively in his thesis p.71 and notes on p.81.

¹²⁹ Paul Sonnino, *Mazarin’s Quest: The Congress of Westphalia and the Coming of the Fronde* (Harvard, 2009), p.21.

¹³⁰ Roosen, *Louis XIV and the Rise of Modern Diplomacy*, p.69.

¹³¹ Roosen, *Louis XIV and the Rise of Modern Diplomacy*, p.70.

¹³² Hogan, *Négociations*, p.3.

intervention in the Three Kingdoms on behalf of his ally against the new *de facto* rulers William and Mary could appear justified and indeed justifiable in a propaganda sense.

D'Avaux detailed instructions were from Louis himself, dated at Marly, 11 February 1689 though they were probably drawn up by Colbert de Croissy who signed them. While part of the instructions could be regarded as standard, there were elements more specific to this expedition. The intention is clearly expressed that once military control has been successfully established over all Ireland, there should be serious consideration given to an army crossing to Scotland and then England. Such indeed was James' immediate aim, although the French always made their support contingent on complete control of Ireland.

To this end, D'Avaux is encouraged to find reliable informants both in Ireland and Britain who are able to supply him with information, for payment, concerning events and politics in both Westminster and Scotland, in particular relating to the upcoming Edinburgh Convention. The ambassador is encouraged to try to identify members of the House of Commons willing to oppose William of Orange and his projects, and for such MPs to recruit others of like mind. The aim was at least to sow dissension if not actively promote opposition. D'Avaux should reserve up to 100,000 livres to sustain such an opposition grouping.¹³³ Regarding Ireland, the diplomat is rather naively exhorted to promote peace between Catholics and Protestants and to encourage different political factions to forget their differences and work together in support of James II's efforts to regain his throne.

D'Avaux was in post from March 1689 until early May 1690 in Ireland, working closely with James II. His extant official correspondence is a valuable source of information on James, his various advisors and their actions in this period. As for most career diplomats of the time, his function required him to regularly send home written reports on a wide variety of topics and this duty D'Avaux fulfilled to the letter. In Ireland, he was involved in decisions regarding the government of the country, military, economic and administrative, as well as trying to organise information gathering in a Three Kingdoms context. His letters are especially informative for the *bête noire* of the French in Ireland, the ambitious John Drummond, Earl of Melfort. Despite officially agreeing with many of D'Avaux's suggestions and plans in Ireland, generally sensible and pragmatic, Melfort, through his flattery of and influence over James, frequently sabotaged them by persuading the king to

¹³³ Hogan, *Négociations*, p.5. In the French foreign affairs archives, the identity of this preferred leader of the opposition is not stated initially. Only later is it revealed to be Henry Hyde, 2nd Earl of Clarendon.

act differently. Tyrconnell, James's Lord Deputy in Ireland, also resented Melfort's influence as nefarious and was himself favoured by D'Avaux. Moreover, he was obliged to referee between the English and Scottish advisors of James and Irish nationalistic elements who favoured a Catholic monarch but less his very English views.¹³⁴ This was evident in the Dublin Parliament ordered by James, where he opposed many concessions to Catholics, much to D'Avaux's dismay. In a general way, therefore, D'Avaux's posting to Ireland was much more intense than previous or subsequent postings, as it contrasts with the regular conduct of diplomats, who were more only consulted on foreign policy issues than domestic questions.

Another aspect of D'Avaux's duties was to make sure that there was only one French point of view being put to James. In April and May 1689, a French naval officer, the Chevalier de Pointis, made various suggestions to the English king regarding the use of French navy ships in Ireland.¹³⁵ These included sending some to bombard Derry in a similar fashion as had been done with newly designed bomb ketches at Genoa in 1684 and against Barbary pirate cities of Tripoli and Tunis.¹³⁶ This suggestion was not appreciated by D'Avaux, who advised against it and then wrote to Seignelay in France about Pointis. Seignelay quickly wrote back to Pointis, stating firstly he did not accept the suggestion was a valid plan. He did not want to risk French vessels operating far from home bases (in France, as Seignelay saw it). More importantly, the navy secretary told him in no uncertain terms that all future suggestions would first have to go before D'Avaux, as he was the king's minister in Ireland.¹³⁷ Another figure whom D'Avaux may have had to restrain was Conrad von Rosen, the Livonian-born French commander of James's forces in Ireland. Rosen wrote often to James, but it was clear they did not see eye to eye.

A brief statistical study of the extant D'Avaux correspondence related to Ireland gives insights into both the realms of his involvement and his contacts with key figures in the French government. In his correspondence to France, one sees D'Avaux expressing his frustration as to why ostensibly obvious organisational decisions regarding army training

¹³⁴ Corp, *A Court in Exile*, p.23.

¹³⁵ Symcox, *The Crisis of French Sea Power* p.85.

¹³⁶ Symcox, *The Crisis of French Sea Power*, pp.38, 160.

¹³⁷ Pierre Clement, *L'Italie en 1671: Relation d'un Voyage du Mis {sic} de Seignelay, Suivie de Lettres Inedites* (Paris, 1867), p.344–346. Pointis suggested keeping a small French fleet in Ireland to protect James and harry English merchant shipping, perhaps at Kinsale. This prefigured the Royal Navy's use of the same place from 1690 on. Symcox, *Crisis of French sea power*, p.85.

or revenue collection had not been adopted and enforced. Likewise, they are valuable for showing how D'Avaux interacted with the ministers in Louis's government. Whom he wrote to depended on what the topic was. For overall policy relating to France and England, this orientation obviously came from the king, either directly or via Croissy, the secretary for foreign affairs. For military matters, such as army supplies, D'Avaux corresponded with Louvois. Here he underlined the penury of resources available on the island, knowing full well of the French policy of trying to support armies in theatre using local supplies. On trade-related subjects the ambassador wrote to Seignelay, navy secretary and Croissy's nephew.¹³⁸ For reports containing confidential information, or indeed compromising appraisals of people, D'Avaux had been given encoding tables. A secretary or scribe could encode missives after their dictation and prepare them to be sent to France via small packet vessels assigned to this task.¹³⁹

Taking as a basis the letters published in Hogan, D'Avaux sent 199 official letters to France in his capacity as ambassador and received 95, and this over a period of 13 months, from March 1689 to April 1690 (see table below). Given that envoys were advised to write often and cover any subjects of possible interest, this explains why he wrote twice as many as he received.

¹³⁸ Pillorget, "Ireland and Louis XIV" (1995), p.12.

¹³⁹ While it is known that D'Avaux had secretaries working for him in Ireland, they are not named in his published papers, so it is difficult to ascertain whether Gravel was among them. He certainly does not figure in the Index of D'Avaux's correspondence in Hogan, *Négociations*.

Table I: Breakdown of D'Avaux's official correspondence while in Ireland, 1689-1690.¹⁴⁰

Letters sent by D'Avaux	Recipients	Number
	Louis XIV	44
	Colbert de Croissy, Foreign Affairs Secretary	49
	Louvois, War Minister	63
	Seignelay, Navy Secretary & King's Household	43
Total		199
Letters received by D'Avaux	Senders	Number
	Louis XIV	26
	Colbert de Croissy, Foreign Affairs Secretary	29
	Louvois, War Minister	23
	Seignelay, Navy Secretary & King's Household	17
Total		95

¹⁴⁰ Source : Hogan, *Négociations*, (Dublin, 1934). The count of letters is mine.

As a clarification, one must be careful with the D'Avaux – Croissy correspondence figures going in both directions. Most of the time when the king is writing to D'Avaux that is the main letter of instructions, with an accompanying cover letter from Croissy. The odd time the king set out the general lines of action to take in certain circumstances, and stated that D'Avaux will get details from Croissy, so Croissy's letters are longer in that case.

Likewise, D'Avaux almost always accompanies his letters to the king with a cover letter to Croissy, his hierarchical superior in the foreign affairs department. The fact that D'Avaux corresponded directly with the king underlines the interest Louis XIV had in James and the Irish campaign. Indeed, Sarmant notes that many of D'Avaux's letters carry the mention that Louis himself had read them, or had them read to him.¹⁴¹ D'Avaux also wrote many letters to Louvois, as much of his time in Ireland was spent considering the military situation, discussing supplies needed and trying to highlight army organisational issues to James. Even so, the number is high, and given the view that the D'Avaux family were clients of the Le Tellier clan, this desire to inform Louvois could also be seen as service to one's patron.¹⁴²

To finance James's activities, D'Avaux was entrusted with the control of the initial 500,000 livres funding provided by Louis. This seems to have been supplied in gold coin, but there were instructions for the officials transporting it to try to change some of this into silver coinage before embarking.¹⁴³ The first 300,000 was to be paid out on James's instructions as required. D'Avaux was, however, ordered to keep in reserve the remaining 200,000 livres, to be used only in case of necessity and revealed only when the first amount was exhausted.¹⁴⁴ His correspondence naturally includes what some of these monies had

¹⁴¹ Thierry Sarmant, *Régner et Gouverner, Louis XIV et ses Ministres* (Paris, 2010), p.189.

¹⁴² Thierry Sarmant, *Les Ministres de la Guerre 1570–1792* (Paris, 2007), p.279. Luc-Normand Tellier, *Face aux Colbert: les Le Tellier, Vauban, Turgot* (Quebec, 1987), p.80.

¹⁴³ This underlines the war footing on which the French acted in Ireland. Normally in peacetime serving ambassadors relied on letters of change, which could be cashed through the networks of international merchant banking families. While in Germany, the Gravels used the Hensch family in Paris and their Frankfurt correspondents, the Ochs family. See Claude Badalo-Dulong, *Trente Ans de Diplomatie Francaise en Allemagne* (Paris, 1956), pp.240–241. The officials were Commis de l'Extraordinaire de la Guerre, one being a certain Tuffereau. It might be the same Tuffereau who appears in 1708 as a premier commis of the Contrôle Générale des Finances. See Andrée Laudy et al. (eds), *Archives du Contrôle Générale des Finances, Répertoire Numérique de la Sous-Série G7* (Paris, 1999). This PDF is available from the website: www.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr.

¹⁴⁴ AAE, CP, Ang, 169, f.11 and suite. Hogan, *Négociations* pp.5–6. From a practical point of view, the funds were in care of two officials from the office of the Contrôleur

been spent on, but in general D'Avaux and other French officials were dismayed with the speed with which James managed to go through the first 300,000 livres. D'Avaux's advice to James on financial restraint, which did not earn him that monarch's favour, are a recurring theme in his correspondence.¹⁴⁵ Also treated at length are D'Avaux's views, reflecting Louis's decision, that James should not attempt to cross to Scotland or England until all of Ireland had been subdued and that militarily Ireland had been put in a state of readiness to resist William of Orange, should any Jacobite campaign on the British mainland go awry. James himself was interested in Ireland only as a stepping stone to Britain.¹⁴⁶

D'Avaux could be viewed as an *eminence grise* figure, almost a powerful minister in his own right rather than a pure ambassador from a foreign power. The scope of his activities in Ireland underline what an indefatigable worker he was on behalf of the Sun King. In James, however, it could be said that he had found almost a nemesis. The practical, logical suggestions he made to James regarding reducing the size of the army, setting up army stores at strategic points around the island and tightening civil administration either fell on deaf ears or stayed a dead letter, because the king never ensured his subordinates carried out the policies.¹⁴⁷ While D'Avaux sent letters back to France expressing his frustration at this, and how difficult it was to work with James, others, like Melfort, wrote to James's Queen in France. These letters, critical of D'Avaux, were sent to Saint-Germain. Through Mary of Modena, these views reached Louis.

As will be seen later, those opposed to D'Avaux — or rather anxious to use James to their advantage, such as the Comte de Lauzun — were able to use his own honesty against him in order to advance a very different agenda. D'Avaux knew this was going on at court due to private correspondence he received from friends, but could only appeal to Louis that accusations of disrespect towards James II or neglect of his affairs were false. Gradually, however, any trust between D'Avaux and James was lost, and Louis realised this.

General des Finances, who sailed to Ireland with the convoy. Simms, *Jacobite Ireland*, p.62.

¹⁴⁵ Interestingly enough, D'Avaux himself seems to have been in some personal financial difficulty as he states that he went to Ireland at a time of "*du plus grand délabrement des affaires de ma famille*". He later successfully petitioned Croissy to ensure he gained a "*gratification*" of 12,000 livres.. AAE, CP, Angleterre, 169, D'Avaux to Louis, 6 December 1689, f.293, also AAE, CP, 169, f.211.

¹⁴⁶ Corp, *A Court in Exile*, p.23.

¹⁴⁷ Corp, *A Court in Exile*, p.25.

Moreover, due to Lauzun's prompting and Mary's support, James himself requested that Lauzun be sent to Ireland with troops to support him.¹⁴⁸

The decision was made to recall D'Avaux. In his letter, Louis made it clear that he was pleased with his conduct. D'Avaux himself left Ireland reluctantly, believing he still had much to offer and he was still writing memoranda in his final days before sailing. Louis knew from the correspondence and gossips that D'Avaux and Lauzun were hostile to each other, and it would cause trouble if both were in Ireland. This is reflected in Croissy's follow-up letter, stating that the recall was also to avoid any incidents, "pour eviter tout contrariete qui pourroit faire naitre d'incidents entre vous-mesme et mondit. Seigneur de Lauzun."¹⁴⁹

That he was not held responsible for the problems the French met in Ireland is shown by the fact that D'Avaux was invited by the king to visit him at Marly, a sought-after sign of favour at court.¹⁵⁰ In November 1692, he was named ambassador to Sweden, a prestigious posting clearly demonstrating that he retained the king's confidence in his abilities.¹⁵¹ He died in Paris in 1709.

Don't judge a monk by his habit? The Abbé de Gravel in Ireland, 1689–1691

A shadowy figure operating on the sidelines of Jacobite forces in Ireland in the 1689–1691 period was a French cleric, the Abbé de Gravel.¹⁵² From primary-source evidence, it is clear he was operating in Galway in late 1690 and the early months of 1691 and that he wrote to Louvois on a number of occasions.

Gravel's background was as an experienced lower-level diplomat who had been on many postings in Germany. Nevertheless, it is not clear who this figure was exactly and what was he doing in Ireland.¹⁵³ This part of the chapter will attempt to find out what Gravel's functions were in Ireland. First, though, I will attempt to give a broad overview of his overall experience and then I will analyse in detail the content of his correspondence.

¹⁴⁸ The circumstances surrounding the appointment of Lauzun are the subject of a later chapter.

¹⁴⁹ AAE, CP Angl. 169, f.241, 16 Nov 1689, Croissy to D'Avaux.

¹⁵⁰ Roosen, *Louis XIV and the Rise of Modern Diplomacy*, p.70.

¹⁵¹ Roosen, *Louis XIV and the Rise of Modern Diplomacy* pp.70–71.

¹⁵² The Irish documentary records relating to this character generally have the family name spelling as De Gravelle. Modern historians refer to the family as De Gravel and so I shall term them.

¹⁵³ Gravel came to my attention through his letter in the Mulloy printed sources. His presence in Ireland is also mentioned by Symcox, *Thesis*, p.294-5.

Although the body of evidence for the complete career of Abbé Jacques de Gravel is a little scanty compared with D'Avaux, it is possible to establish "islands of truth" and pinpoint him at various specific times. If his role and actions in Ireland are shadowy, background research reveals his profile to be rather more interesting than just that of a random French cleric posted to Ireland with the army. He first appears in diplomatic records as a secretary to his (probably) older brother, the better documented Robert de Gravel (1616–1684), a French envoy frequently sent on missions to different states in the Empire and the Swiss cantons. Robert had previously worked as a secretary in the service of France's Prime Minister, Cardinal Mazarin (1602–1661).¹⁵⁴ O'Connor mentions Robert de Gravel in the context of French foreign policy in Germany, and calls him "one of the most experienced and knowledgeable of French diplomats in the Empire at the time".¹⁵⁵ Through loyalty and hard work, this member of a *robe* family gained reward and recognition. By 1666, he is recorded as lord of Marly near Metz in Lorraine. In 1676 he was named a Knight of the Order of Saint Michael. Later on, his lordship of Marly was raised to a marquisate, thus entering the higher aristocracy. He died while on the key posting to the Swiss cantons at Soleure in 1684.¹⁵⁶ Robert's son, Jules de Gravel, succeeded him as Marquis de Marly and unusually also followed a diplomatic career. He was posted to Switzerland in 1684, then later to Trier, Cologne and Brandenburg.¹⁵⁷ This son died in 1726.

The best-documented period of Jacques de Gravel's career is the early years, chiefly the mid-1660s to the 1670s. For part of this time, he was resident French emissary at the court of John-Philip von Schoenborn, Archbishop of Mainz. This prelate and temporal ruler was in the strategic ambit of both France and an Imperial Elector, a sometime ally of Louis XIV, a position attested to in a number of sources. The position was a delicate one, however, as Louis XIV notes in his memoirs. "I sent the Abbé de Gravel with instructions

¹⁵⁴ Pierre Clement, *Lettres, Instructions et Mémoires de Colbert* (Paris, 1861), vol.I, p.340.

¹⁵⁵ John T. O'Connor, "William Egon von Fuerstenburg, German agent in the Service of Louis XIV", *French Historical Studies*, vol.5, no.2 (Autumn 1967), 122.

¹⁵⁶ Since the 15th century, the French had recruited Swiss mercenary troops. In fact, one Swiss regiment, that of Zurlauben, served in Ireland under Lauzun in 1690.

¹⁵⁷ *Recueil des Instructions données aux Ambassadeurs et Ministres de France*, vol.XVI, Prusse, p.224. Roosen states that ambassadors could not purchase postings. Moreover, as the postings often did not result in any financial gain, diplomats were sometimes reluctant to have their children follow this career path. See Roosen, *Louis XIV and the Rise of Modern Diplomacy*, p.68.

to remain about the Elector of Mayntz, in order to watch more closely his conduct, which was not altogether sincere.”¹⁵⁸

The most complete account of Gravel’s actions at Mainz is in Badalo-Dulong’s work on *louisquatorzien* diplomacy in the Empire.¹⁵⁹ This catalogues the many different actions in which Gravel engaged, aimed at improving the French position and influence vis-à-vis the Elector.¹⁶⁰ Like D’Avaux, these ranged from political negotiations to issues regarding trade and commerce as well as sending information back to France, all duties of a contemporary diplomat. He also sponsored a baroque musical celebration for the Elector’s entertainment in 1668.¹⁶¹ From Mainz, Gravel wrote to a number of key figures, notably Colbert, the minister for commerce, in June 1673 and to the young secretary for war, the Marquis de Louvois, on a number of occasions in 1673 and 1674.¹⁶² Following this posting, he probably returned to France for a period. Relying heavily on Badalo-Dulong is Thompson’s study of the diplomatic position of the Electorate of Mainz, but over a longer period.¹⁶³ Wiedeburg gives detail on Gravel’s other postings in his work on philosopher Gottfried von Leibniz (1646–1716). He states Gravel was resident in Mainz from 22

¹⁵⁸ *Memoirs of Lewis the Fourteenth, Written by himself and Addressed to his Son* (London, 1806), vol.1, p.51.

¹⁵⁹ Badalo-Dulong, *Trente Ans*.

¹⁶⁰ The only image I have found of Gravel is an engraving dated 1671 at the Austrian National Library. It shows him in clerical garb and mentions that he was Resident envoy at Mainz and abbot of Bois-Grolland.

¹⁶¹ J. Vanuxem, “Des Fêtes de Louis XIV au Baroque Allemand”, *Cahier de l’Association Internationale des études françaises*, no.9 (1957), p.101, citing Menestrier, *Représentations de Musique Antiques et Modernes* (Paris, 1681). Entertainments, here consisting of allegorical compositions sung in Latin, were favoured by Louis XIV as part of his taste for sponsored public spectacles. For a discussion of this aspect of propaganda, see Georgia Cowart, *The Triumph of Pleasure: Louis XIV and the Politics of Spectacle* (2008).

¹⁶² Georges B. Depping, *Correspondance Administrative sous le Regne de Louis XIV entre le Cabinet du Roi et les Secretaries d’Etat, le Chancelier de France, et les Intendants et Gouverneurs de Provinces* (Paris, 1850–1855), 4 vols: Gravel to Colbert, 1 June 1673, sends receipts for a pension of 1,000 ecus paid by him to Chancellor Mertz and requesting reimbursement, vol.2, pp.235–236; Gravel to Louvois, 24 November 1673, on the plans to set up a postal service between Metz and Mainz, vol.4, p.774. Louvois had been appointed Surintendant des Postes in 1668.

¹⁶³ R.H. Thompson, *Lothar-Franz Von Schoenborn and the Diplomacy of the Electorate of Mainz* (The Hague 1973).

February 1666 to 16 December 1674, was posted to Hesse-Darmstadt in 1675 and was then present at a conference in Marchienne-au-Pont in the Spanish Netherlands in 1676.¹⁶⁴

Early that same year, French official records show that he spent a short period at Liege involved in discussions with the Prince-Bishop.¹⁶⁵ These concerned the continued neutrality of the city in the Franco-Dutch war (1671–1678) and the possible evacuation of troops from there and the citadels of Huy and Dinant, again in the “buffer zone” territory of the Spanish Netherlands between France and the Dutch Republic. Almost two years later, his whereabouts can be identified in a letter to Leibniz from his friend Louis Ferrand, dated 8 September 1678. It refers to the abbot as quietly living the life of a reclusive monk in an abbey in Poitou.¹⁶⁶

Mr l'Abbé de Gravel est toujours en son Abbaye de Poictou ou il mene non pas une vie d'Ambassadeur mais une vie du plus grand solitaire qui fut jamais dans la Thebaide. C'est un changement si extraordinaire que tout le monde en est dans l'admiration. Il y a prez de deux ans qu'il fait cette vie et je pense qu'il n'a pas envie de la quitter ni de se mesler jamais plus des emplois publics. Je luy feray vos compliments la premiere fois que j'auray l'honneur de luy ecrire qui sera samedi prochain s'il plaist a Dieu.¹⁶⁷

That Jacques de Gravel personally knew Leibniz is not a surprise. In the late 1660s and early 1670s, Leibniz's patron was the Archbishop-Elector of Mainz, and as Gravel was the French envoy, it seems most likely they met there. One might note in passing that Leibniz visited Paris in 1672 and met with Gravel at St Germain en Laye.

After the 1678 letter there followed a long period of obscurity. The Abbé de Gravel seems absent from the diplomatic scene and there is little evidence about his activities or where he was living. It is possible that in the 1680s he acted in an advisory and secretarial capacity to his diplomatic nephew, as he had done for his brother. He surfaced again in

¹⁶⁴ Paul Wiedeburg, *Der Junge Leibniz, das Reich und Europa* (Frankfurt, 1962.), vol.I, p.280.

¹⁶⁵ Bruno Demoulin, *Recueil des Instructions données aux Ambassadeurs et Ministres de France* (1998), vol.XXXI, Principauté de Liège, p.69.

¹⁶⁶ The abbey in question was the Benedictine foundation of Bois-Grolland in the Vendée.

¹⁶⁷ Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Saemtliche Schriften und Briefe Erste Reihe, 1676–1679* (Berlin, 1986), p.361. “The abbot is still in his abbey in Poitou and leads a withdrawn and solitary existence. This is such a change from the life of an ambassador and I think everyone is amazed. He has been there for two years and i do not think he desires any other public roles”. My translation.

official records in a letter from his nephew to Croissy from Bonn in 1687, where he is mentioned as having met the adjutant bishop William Egon von Fuerstenberg.¹⁶⁸

His next appearance was in Ireland in 1690–1691, of which more later. For completeness, it is worth mentioning here subsequent actions of an ancillary nature towards the end of his career. Following the 1687 reference, I have found two other mentions of him. The first is in 1707, when a contemporary news sheet recorded his presence near Neuchâtel in Switzerland in the suite of the Prince de Conti, (François Louis de Bourbon, 1664–1709), at the funeral of the Princesse Marie d’Orléans-Longueville, Duchess of Nemours on 26–28 June. Gravel was, probably there to assist diplomatically in the Conti claim to the lordship of Neuchâtel.¹⁶⁹

In 1726, the Abbé was again mentioned, this time in the *Mercure de France* in an obituary notice for his nephew Jules de Gravel, Marquis de Marly, who had pursued a diplomatic career and died aged 72. Jacques de Gravel is mentioned as brother to the late Robert, and also having served as a diplomat. He is named as abbot of Argentan in southern Normandy. It is not clear whether the abbé was still alive at this stage, although if he were, he would have been very old.¹⁷⁰

In summary, therefore, it is certain from the records cited above that Jacques de Gravel originated from a family of either minor gentry or more probably *robe* with a record of faithful service to the crown. He followed the lead of a brother who served first Mazarin and then the new king when Louis took personal direction of government at the latter’s death in 1661. He entered religious life, a step common in younger sons of aspiring families of the time.¹⁷¹ By the mid-1670s, he was an experienced diplomat who had been sent on a number of long- and short-term postings and assignments of medium importance, but not to the level of posting open to his brother or nephew, both marquises.

¹⁶⁸ Gerin, *Revue des Questions Historiques* (Paris, 1883), no.XXXIII, pp.82–106. Cited in Badalo-Dulong, *Trente Ans* (1956), p.243.

¹⁶⁹ Jacques Bernard, Henri Basnage and Jean Du mont, *Lettres Historiques: Contentant ce qui s’est Passé de Plus Important en Europe* (Paris, 1707), vol.32, p.140. The Prince de Conti was ultimately unsuccessful in his bid.

¹⁷⁰ *Mercure de France*, October 1726, pp.2193–2194.

¹⁷¹ He was certainly in the Benedictine order, judging by the houses he was associated with, Bois-Grolland and Argentan, both Benedictine. His nephew, Maximilien-Henri de Gravel, was abbot of the Benedictine house of St Symphorien in Metz, perhaps showing a family leaning to the order.

The surviving correspondence written by Gravel himself and addressed to Louvois is the letter dated 25 December 1690 and sent from Galway.¹⁷² The letter is of nine pages of closely written manuscript, in quarto, in a regular and not overly flowery hand. In summary, it is a wide-ranging missive covering Irish politics as well as touching on the building of fortifications at Galway and outlining some recent military actions and contact with the enemy.

The context of the time when Gravel wrote to Louvois is worth examining a little more closely. That Gravel was writing to Louvois is not surprising. The war minister had a great thirst for information and maintained relations with many officials, some with no direct hierarchical link to him. Of course, as a very powerful minister, no official wanted to earn his disfavour by not cooperating, unless one had a strong benefactor of one's own. Moreover, by 1690 Louvois is generally deemed to have lost control of the Irish campaign and had less influence over war policy in general.¹⁷³ His need for informants, such as Gravel, might therefore have taken greater significance.

In the specific context of the Irish campaign, Gravel sent his letters at a time when Louvois was gathering information on Ireland. Louis had been considering whether to keep supporting the Jacobite party in Ireland. In October and November 1690, Louis and James had meetings at Fontainebleau and Versailles to discuss this, with Tyrconnell certainly present at some.¹⁷⁴

Gravel is full of praise for Patrick Sarsfield and describes him in glowing terms as a leader of "the party of the King of France" in Ireland, in contrast to Tyrconnell, who he believes favours treating with the Williamites.¹⁷⁵ Gravel was not alone in identifying Sarsfield as a soldier of value. D'Avaux had singled him out, in a letter to Louvois concerning candidates for command of Irish soldiers to be sent to France.¹⁷⁶ James, however, opposed this and

¹⁷² Mulloy, *Franco-Irish Correspondence*, vol.III, pp.164–169, The SHD version I consulted on microfilm in the National Library in Dublin, which has copies of many SHD records specifically relating to Ireland. It is signed by the abbot himself. The AAE version is certainly not in the same hand as the SHD, being much smaller and tightly spaced, probably a copy made later. This I consulted at the AAE, CP, Angletterre, 170, f.170.

¹⁷³ Rowlands, *Dynastic State*, pp.58–59.

¹⁷⁴ Symcox, *Thesis*, pp.297–298.

¹⁷⁵ James II, before leaving for France, allowed Tyrconnell to treat with William III if he thought the war could not be continued, Symcox, *Thesis*, pp.385–386.

¹⁷⁶ Hogan, *Négociation*, s.p.519. D'Avaux to Louvois, 21 October 1689.

instead offered Justin McCarthy, Viscount Mountcashel, whom he did not like, probably because Mountcashel was prone to telling home truths.¹⁷⁷

The Context of Gravel's actions in Ireland

The political and military context of the time is also a key to understanding the nature of Gravel's actions and the importance of his letters. After the Battle of the Boyne in July 1690 and the flight of James II to France, the remaining Jacobite forces withdrew to the strategic south-western city of Limerick. The Lord Deputy Tyrconnell and Lauzun, commander of the 5,000 or so remaining French expeditionary force, believed the place too weak. On hearing news of the approach of a strong Williamite army intent on besieging the city, they decided to withdraw to Galway, clearly in the expectation that Limerick would fall. Lauzun himself was waiting for a French fleet to embark his troops, as he feared his troops would be captured.¹⁷⁸

The expected rout did not happen however. This was helped by Patrick Sarsfield, who led a daring cavalry raid on the approaching English artillery train in the lead-up to the siege, destroying a number of large pieces.¹⁷⁹ The resulting delay while the Williamites awaited more cannon, coupled with the onset of inclement weather, put the besiegers at a disadvantage.¹⁸⁰ To general surprise, the Irish, under the command of a French officer, De Boisseleau, put up a determined resistance and held the city despite vigorous efforts by superior enemy forces. With the prospect of having to settle in for a prolonged leaguer over the winter and the threat of an invasion of England following the Royal Navy defeat at Beachy Head, William decided to return to England. He raised the siege after 22 days on 29 August 1690.¹⁸¹ The Jacobites, though weakened, had survived to fight another campaign. This was a crucial moment, because once Louis learned of the success at Limerick, he believed the Irish front was not lost after all.

It was suspected at the time that Tyrconnell was thinking of seeking terms from William III, and it would appear that he had the authority from James II to do so. From this point on, Tyrconnell's authority gradually eroded away in favour of Sarsfield and his party, who

¹⁷⁷ Simms, *Jacobite Ireland*, p.73.

¹⁷⁸ Simms, *Jacobite Ireland* p.159.

¹⁷⁹ It was on foot of this exploit that in January 1691, James II named Sarsfield Earl of Lucan. Petrie, *The Great Tyrconnell*, p.228.

¹⁸⁰ Simms, *Jacobite Ireland*, pp.168–170. Childs, *The Williamite Wars in Ireland*, pp.248–251.

¹⁸¹ Simms, *Jacobite Ireland*, pp.170–171.

favoured continuing the war. In any case, his health was not what it had been, and many thought he did not have the mental and physical strength needed for his position.¹⁸² In this light, Tyrconnell took the opportunity to depart for France to consult James II at Saint-Germain, to have his position as Viceroy confirmed and also to speak with Louis XIV. Along with Lauzun and about 5,000 French soldiers, he embarked aboard a French fleet under D'Anfreville which had put in at Galway, and sailed on 23 September 1690 to Brest.¹⁸³ James II's illegitimate son, James FitzJames, Duke of Berwick (1670–1734), was left in command, with advisors to deal with civil matters. Although blood guaranteed Berwick's nominal position, he was thought a puppet of Tyrconnell and too inexperienced to command the army.¹⁸⁴

In the various discussions on whether to support Ireland, Louvois, through the information he received from Gravel and others, would have been able to advise the king and give him details perhaps not supplied by Tyrconnell, such as the competing factions among James's followers in Ireland. The French would have been aware that supplies to Ireland had been wasted before and that backing a side itself divided was a risky venture.

In fact, Tyrconnell, while in France, compiled a long memorandum regarding what supplies the Jacobites needed in Ireland. For Louvois, this must have seemed depressingly long: it touched on all points of arms, foodstuffs, uniforms, gunpowder and money. In short, anything needed for the campaign would have to be sent from France. While in the greater scheme of things the amounts were small, it should be noted that France was hard pressed to defend its own borders and that men, money and supplies were all needed at home. Furthermore, sending supplies by sea to Ireland outside the main navigating season was fraught with difficulties. This, coupled with the increasing reach of the Royal Navy, meant that not all supplies sent would arrive.

Gravel states that his previous letter of 52 pages had been written on 24 November and given to a French navy captain, Mr Fontaine, commanding a frigate named *La*

¹⁸² Tyrconnell's health does not seem to have been robust, and according to observers declined after the Boyne. However, given the enmity which had existed with Melfort and then with Sarsfield, he might have played on this to avoid working with them. He almost certainly used his bad health on occasion as a ploy, most notably in France when he went there with Lauzun in late 1690.

¹⁸³ Tyrconnell had been Lord Deputy in Ireland and was named Viceroy by James on his departure from Ireland. Petrie, *The Great Tyrconnell*, p.229.

¹⁸⁴ Simms, *Jacobite Ireland*, p.185.

Surprenante.¹⁸⁵ Due to bad weather, this ship did not leave until 7 December. “Je n’ay peu continuer d’informer Votre Grandeur de la suite des affaires d’Irlande, parce qu’il n’est sorty aucun bastiment pour France jusqu’a present.”¹⁸⁶

Gravel explains that his news from Ireland was halted because no French navy ship carrying his letters had been able to leave for France. Given that sea communications was the only way to relay letters between Ireland and France, it had been decided by Louis in February 1690 that the navy should maintain ships at the ready. The king had ordered vessels to sail to Ireland every 15 days from Brest with the express purpose of carrying correspondence. So that this did not take up too many ships, those in Ireland should stay 15 days, but not wait for letters, to avoid having all the ships either in France or in Ireland at any one time.¹⁸⁷ It is possible that with the departure of the great majority of French troops from Ireland in September 1690, these conditions had been relaxed somewhat. Coupled with the lateness of the navigating season, vital news Louvois and others needed for decision-making was delayed, interrupting this commerce of information at the time Gravel had letters to send.

From a military point of view, Gravel gives a detailed account of recent happenings. After the fall of Cork and strategically important Kinsale to combined English and Danish forces, both sides had for the most part mostly put their forces into winter quarters as best they could.¹⁸⁸ Sarsfield, however, had been active in taking the fight to the enemy. An example is of a raiding action across the river Shannon, the front line at the time. This episode involved notably the burning of Mullingar, a town east of the Shannon and an obvious muster point for the Williamites. From a political point of view, Gravel reminded the war minister that there were two factions in the Irish camp, that of the King of France under Col. Sarsfield and that of Tyrconnell, whose role was taken by Berwick during the latter’s absence in France.

En representant aussi a Vostre Grandeur l’estat et la necessite du pais, je luy depeignis les deux parties qui s’estoient formez en Irlande; l’un que

¹⁸⁵ Such a long letter was typical of diplomatic correspondents who were not known for their brevity.

¹⁸⁶ A1 1082, Abbé de Gravel to Louvois, 25 Dec 1690, in Mulloy, *Franco-Irish Correspondence*, III, p.164 et c.

¹⁸⁷ Molloy., vol.I, p.24, Louvois to Lauzun.

¹⁸⁸ Kinsale was used thereafter as a Royal Navy supply and minor repair station, a fact lost on the French who had spurned Pointis’s suggestion to use Kinsale as a naval base. Symcox, *The Crisis of French Sea Power*, p.85.

l'on appelloit le party du Roy de France [la teste] duquel estoit Mr. de Sarsfil [Sarsfield], et l'autre estoit celui de Milord Tyrconnel, qui avoit pour chef Milord duc de Berouic [Berwick]. Les suites de cette faction estoit beaucoup a craindre dans une conjuncture ou le Prince d'Orange ne s'endort pas et l'auroit sans doute fomentees.¹⁸⁹

Gravel mentions later that members of Tyrconnell's group were suspected of corresponding with the enemy. Berwick was persuaded by Sarsfield that two staff officers, Alexander MacDonnell, governor of Galway, and Thomas Nugent, Baron Riverston, were in this group and had them arrested.¹⁹⁰ Given Sarsfield's popularity with the army, Berwick, being himself quite ill at the time, was not in a position to oppose him. Moreover, Berwick went on to appoint him governor of Galway and the province of Connaught.

Gravel stated that he had asked Sarsfield whether Louvois could address messages for him to Sarsfield. Sarsfield accepted and said he would hand over anything he got for Gravel. For Gravel, this was positive as anyone with suspicions of him was unlikely to dare open letters addressed to Sarsfield. There were unfavourable rumours circulating about these individuals, and in view of Sarsfield's reputation of strong personal loyalty to James II, there was little Berwick could do to counter him. For Sarsfield, it might have been a useful tactic to ingratiate himself with a Frenchman he knew to be writing to the powerful Louvois at a time when Tyrconnell was in France. Certainly, Gravel seems to be full of praise for Sarsfield as being able to fire his troops with enthusiasm and spur them on to continue to fight. He pleads the Irish case for more supplies and states their hostility to any plans to submit themselves to the Prince of Orange. The picture painted by the writer is of the town and people of Galway in straitened circumstances, with morale kept up by Sarsfield, who only needed French supplies, arms and a French commander to help them continue resistance.

Feeling that he could be accused of partiality towards the Jacobites, Gravel probably felt that he was painting too rosy a picture of Sarsfield for the war minister. He therefore stated that he is not partisan to any of the Jacobite groups, but that his only desire in Ireland has been to serve Louis "depuis vint [20] mois que j'y suis entre...l'envie seule que j'ay de server mon Roy et de meriter vostre protection." This is a key chronological point, because this letter from late December 1690 situates the cleric's arrival in Ireland to be about May

¹⁸⁹ Abbé de Gravel to Louvois, 25 Dec 1690 in Mulloy, III, p.164 (A1 1082).

¹⁹⁰ In secondary literature, Tyrconnell's group is known as "the peace party". For the arrest of MacDonnell and Lord Riverston, see Simms, *Jacobite Ireland*, p.192.

1689. This helps to underline what a good understanding of Ireland Gravel must have acquired by this stage, and the usefulness of this experience to Louvois as a corroborating source of news.

Gravel also wrote that the enemy forces are not in as good a state as believed, according to news he gleaned from a deserting Williamite cavalryman. The informant told how Williamite forces were in ill-condition, lacking steady pay and suffering at the hands of the Irish *rapparees* (roving Jacobite guerrilla bands):

sont dans un etat pitoyable, qu'il ne vient aucun argent d'Angleterre, qu'il ya huit ou neuf moys qu'elles n'ont point este payees, qu'elles sont tres mecontentes, et qu'elles ne vivent que de pillages, que les raparees les tourmentent, et les fatiguent a un point qui ne se peut dire.¹⁹¹

This individual went on to say that if the Jacobites were willing to pay a bounty to those like himself, many others would desert too. Gravel reminds Louvois he had himself pointed this out in a previous letter. To this end, he had caused messages to be sent to and distributed among the enemy troops inviting desertion.” Je representay cet article a Vostre Grandeur dans ma lettre du 24 novembre, et des billets que j'avois fait semer parmy les ayenemis, comme un des plus essentiels au service du Roy. ”¹⁹²

Gravel then returned to the subject of Sarsfield, stating that he has the respect and loyalty of the Irish soldiers. Given that Sarsfield was a head of a faction, Gravel pointed out that the Irishman was well aware of the importance of the French connection and states that Sarsfield never missed an opportunity to tell his soldiers of the generosity of the French king.

Qu'apres toute les bonnes qualites dont il est revetu, il en a une qui les surpasse de bien loin, qui est, une si profonde reconnaissance des bienfaits que l'Irlande a receus de la liberalite du Roy, qu'il ravit tous ceux a qui il en parle... et les dipose a tout entreprendre pour le service de sa Majeste.

Knowing that he has praised Sarsfield and left himself open to a charge of not being objective, Gravel tried to reassure Louvois that he was not biased but was merely

¹⁹¹ Abbé de Gravel to Louvois, 25 Dec 1690, A1 1082 .

¹⁹² Abbé de Gravel to Louvois, 25 Dec 1690 This case of a French agent engaging in propaganda activities to undermine the ranks of the enemy is similar to actions against Schomberg's force, examined more fully in Chapter 2.

presenting things as he saw them. Louvois may not have been convinced of Gravel's objectivity: Tyrconnell, and not Sarsfield, was the French's preferred Irish leader and Gravel perhaps made too many positive references to Sarsfield in his letter. Nevertheless, other writers confirmed that Gravel was right in saying that Sarsfield would continue to fight if he could. This was surely useful to know: if the French wanted the fighting in Ireland to continue, Sarsfield was willing to do so. Gravel would certainly have known Tyrconnell was in France at the time of this letter. His letter might have had significance for Louvois as a balance.

Through his close contact with the Irish Jacobites, the Abbé realised that, despite their goodwill, they were in poor shape physically. He wrote of his relief at receiving news from France with the arrival in Galway of the frigate *La Mechante*. From this, he learned that Louis had decided to continue operations in the Irish theatre and so would send supplies.¹⁹³

La joye d'apprendre des nouvelles de France par la fregatte du Roy La Mechante ... fut excessive particulièrement quand on scut que le Roy vouloit bien continuer sa toute puissante protection aux Irlandois, et les assister dans leurs pressans besoins.¹⁹⁴

Well aware that Louvois always demanded solid information from his informants, Gravel wrote of the great need for both food and arms, with the remaining stores containing only six weeks' supply.¹⁹⁵ Nevertheless, some supplies still came in, not through navy convoys but through merchant ships. Gravel relates how some French trading vessels from La Rochelle and Nantes had brought supplies of wheat, iron, salt and wine. This was the type of detail that Louvois required as war minister in charge of organising supplies for the Irish campaign.

That Gravel mentions some ships trading does not contradict Symcox's statement that trade had completely dried up.¹⁹⁶ Nevertheless all the information received needed analysis and corroboration by other sources to ensure its reliability and accuracy. This was merely common sense, but might have been more important to Louvois in the Lauzun period and after, given Louvois's waning influence on the king.¹⁹⁷ It is worth noting that much of the information Gravel supplied regarding the general military situation was echoed by

¹⁹³ Symcox, *Thesis*, p.297.

¹⁹⁴ Abbé de Gravel to Louvois, 25 Dec 1690, (A1 1082).

¹⁹⁵ See chapter 4 on Chamlay regarding Louvois' well-known thirst for information.

¹⁹⁶ Symcox, *Thesis*, , p.297.

¹⁹⁷ Rowlands, *Dynastic State*, p.59.

Ignatius White, Marquis d'Albeville, in letters to James II, Tyrconnell and Louvois.¹⁹⁸

While the Irish had perhaps 40,000 men available, they did not have anything like enough arms. The Abbé says only the Irish cavalry regiments are in good shape. "Ils ont en verite une necessite extreme de toute sorte de munitions et de bouche et de guerre. Il n'y en a pas pour six semaines dans les magasins." Nevertheless, the overall feeling was of resignation, that opposition to the Williamites was their only option, convinced as they are of the enemy's hatred of their religion.

Il y a des homes suffisant pour composer une armée de 40 mil homes, auquels il ne manque que des armes, et il n'y en a pas dix mil dans le pais. Ils paroissent résolus, pour ne pas dire desesperez, de la hayne implacable du Prince d'Orange contre les Catholiques, que de mourir ou vaincre leur est passé en coutume.¹⁹⁹

To a large extent, this was backed up by William III's ill-advised Finglas declaration. Issued in the aftermath of the Boyne, this promised limited amnesty but excluded any gentry or higher nobles among the Jacobites. Coupled with Williamite soldiers' looting of Catholic farmers in the midlands, despite promises of safety, it is generally agreed that this hardened Jacobite resolve to hold out for more. While William himself might have been willing to offer more generous terms to end the war, his English and Irish Protestant advisors opted for a hardline approach, not least because some hoped to gain estates confiscated from Jacobite nobles.²⁰⁰ As Symcox says, "the proclamation tended to harden the Irish resistance rather than pave the way for peace".²⁰¹

Gravel reminds Louvois that in a previous letter he underlined the need for a French commander to come to Ireland, probably as the best way to unite the different Jacobite factions. The French ship brought news on this front, that a commander is going to come, and he is named as the Marquis de Bellefonds, Bernard Gigault (1630–1694).²⁰² It is

¹⁹⁸ See Finch Mss, vol. ii, pp.472–473) HMC (London 1957) regarding content of captured correspondence from D'Albeville. Previously a diplomat for James II, he fled to France in 1688 before sailing to Ireland with the king. He died at St Germain in 1694. See also Simms, *Jacobite Ireland*, p.177.

¹⁹⁹ Abbé de Gravel to Louvois, 25 Dec 1690, (A1 1082), Mulloy, III, p.166.

²⁰⁰ Simms, *Jacobite Ireland*, p.162. Childs, *The Williamite Wars in Ireland*, pp.229, 333. William wanted to promise more, but his English advisers opposed it.

²⁰¹ Symcox, *Thesis*, p.261.

²⁰² Bellefonds in fact never came to Ireland. Instead, it was Charles Chalmot, Marquis de Saint-Ruth, who was sent to command in Ireland. In 1692, Bellefonds was named as one of the commanders of the French troops in Normandy for the abortive attempt to invade England. He also accompanied James II on religious retreats to the abbey of La Trappe.

certain that Gravel, like his masters in France, saw the need to put the organisation of Jacobite forces onto a footing more recognisably effective than had previously occurred. Furthermore, Gravel specifically relates how he spoke to some Irish leaders in various meetings, saying that any French commander must be able to command all of them and that they mostly agreed to this proposition.

Et voulant sonder leurs coeurs d'avantage, je leur repliquay, par maniere d'entretien, qu'un marechal de France ne pourroit reconnoitre personne au dessus de luy. Ils me repartirent qu'il estoit vray, et que quand il y viendrait, il y seroit le maistre.²⁰³

Gravel writes that only two notables did not agree, namely Riverston and MacDonnell, but that they are allied to Tyrconnell: "deux créatures de Milord Tyrconel, dont le party est soupsonne de desseins".

Turning to the general political and military situation in the country, Gravel mentioned that some letters between Williamite commanders had been intercepted and gave Louvois some details of these:

Douglas et quelques autres generaux du Prince D'Orange mandent a Sydnay et a ses confreres de marcher incessamment vers le Chanon, ou ils les joindront au premier jour [i.e. 1 January].

One of these officers can be identified as James Douglas, a Scottish Lieutenant-General in William's army, writing to Henry Viscount Sydney (1641-1704), whom William had recently appointed a Lord Justice in Ireland.²⁰⁴ While intercepting the messages was certainly a fillip to the Jacobite commanders, it was also some good news Gravel was able to tell Louvois from an otherwise gloomy Irish front. From an informational point of view, though, the information gleaned would be of a more tactical than strategic value. In any case, however, much as Louvois might have wanted to intervene in campaigns, local military decisions could be taken only by commanders on the ground, even more so in Ireland, a theatre too far removed from Versailles for more direct intervention.

In the same letter Gravel informs Louvois of the loss to enemy forces under Marlborough of the key southern ports of Kinsale and Cork which he states were sold out - "honteusement vendus a prix d'argent" - and possibly done with the connivance of Jacobite

²⁰³ Abbé de Gravel to Louvois, 25 Dec 1690, (A1 1082), Molloy, iii, p.167.

²⁰⁴ W. Troust, *William III the Stadholder King: A Political Biography*, p.280.

leaders who advocated seeking terms from King William. Probably reflecting attitudes common among the Jacobites at the time, Gravel called one of the officers, Col. Roger MacElligott, “*traître*”. Marlborough’s “joint-operations” action, successfully using the Royal Navy to land troops behind enemy lines, seriously hit French sea communications, a fact probably not lost on Gravel, thus explaining his evident frustration at the deteriorating Jacobite position.²⁰⁵

Gravel continues by stating that the Jacobite forces were trying to entrench themselves by building defensive works, with those at Limerick carried out under the direction of a French officer, the Chevalier de Tangis. Those in Galway were built on the orders of Sarsfield himself. This news was clearly of interest to Louvois, as the building of fortifications had been identified as a priority in French strategic discussions about how best to oppose William III’s forces in Ireland.²⁰⁶

The last points in the letter show the level of detail the Abbé concerned himself with and also the type of detail Louvois wanted to know. Gravel gave details of letters written to Tyrconnell by Riverston and Macdonnell, who had asked Gravel what the best way was to send them. Gravel says he told them to give them to the captain of the frigate that had just arrived to carry them. He added that he told the captain to inform the army *intendant* at Brest of these letters, who could then advise Louvois. From his previous diplomatic experience, Gravel would have been aware that the letters could be intercepted by agents of Louvois in his capacity as Surintendant des Postes. Telling Louvois this was a way to ingratiate himself and show his loyalty.²⁰⁷ It also seems clear that, despite the suspicions which these two Jacobites were under, they trusted Gravel, a trust he no doubt cultivated. This underlines how skilfully Gravel had embedded himself with the Irish so that both factions felt they could trust him.²⁰⁸

The last point the Abbé made concerned the security of his own correspondence, stating that if he learnt any other news he would send another note with the captain of a different ship soon to depart. This note would mention the current letter, so it would be possible for

²⁰⁵ On Marlborough’s action, see Childs, *The Williamite Wars in Ireland*, pp.267–272.

²⁰⁶ See Chapter 4 for the Marquis de Chamlay’s view on building fortifications in Ireland.

²⁰⁷ Stylistically Gravel addresses Louvois in an ingratiating manner, almost obsequiously, calling him “*vostre grandeur*”.

²⁰⁸ Other details given only concern small groups of Frenchmen stranded in Ireland. Some 15 French soldiers, too ill to have embarked for France with the rest of Lauzun’s force, are better, but Gravel was only able to persuade the captain of a French corvette to take four of them aboard when sailing on 6 December.

Louvois to know if a letter had been lost, a standard precaution. He ends by properly assuring the war minister of his devotion to duty and that he awaits his orders, using deferential vocabulary consistent with that of a client: “avec une fidelite et une soumission autant exacte et profonde”.²⁰⁹

Whether he was actually a client of Louvois is an open question. Badalo-Dulong mentions that Robert de Gravel had been favoured by Lionne and that this was extended to his brother Jacques, although he states this was due to ability, as opposed to clientage as one might infer.²¹⁰ From my own research, it is not clear whether the Gravel family were clients of any minister. Moreover, there is no clear evidence in the letter to indicate whether Gravel’s aim in writing to Louvois was an attempt to seek patronage, although he does specifically ask that Louvois give him orders and asks for “vostre protection”. This use of deferential language is indicative only of a lower-level functionary writing to a powerful minister.

There are two other interesting letters from French individuals in Ireland writing to Louvois, which mention Gravel and corroborate his activities, or at least shed a slightly different light on them. The first is from army officer Santons-Boullain, visiting Galway on 6 December 1690.

Un nomme l’Abbé de Gravel, asses connu de Monsieur le comte
D’Avaux pour ce qu’il est dans le temps qu’il etoit ambassadeur en ce
pays, est reste dans cette ville depuis le depart de la flotte, ou il a fait des
chansons injurieuses a la nation et fort a l’avantage des Irlandois, dont il
leur fait sa cour, aupres desquels il s’insinue, en leur disant du bien d’eux
et du mal des François. Il vint par le flotte de Bantry et se dit ingenieur.
Sa conduite au reste n’est pas des plus reglee.²¹¹

This is worthy of note at a number of levels. First, it mirrors what Gravel wrote himself later in his 25 December letter to Louvois, that he had been in Ireland for 20 months, since April or May 1689. This is a timeframe consistent with him coming with the fleet of Chateau-Renault which landed arms and men at Bantry Bay.²¹² This is obviously later than D’Avaux, who arrived with James II in late March. The wording of the letter is ambiguous as to whether the army officer was saying that Gravel was in D’Avaux’s entourage or whether Gravel had told him that he knew important people like D’Avaux in order to be

²⁰⁹ Abbé de Gravel to Louvois, 25 Dec 1690, (A1 1082), Molloy, iii, p.169.

²¹⁰ Badalo-Dulong, *Trente Ans* (1956), p.93.

²¹¹ Santons-Boullain to Louvois, 6th December 1690, (A1 1082), f.182.

²¹² At Bantry, Chateau-Renault’s fleet landed supplies in Ireland and bested a Royal Navy squadron under Russell in May 1689 to return to France safely.

left alone. Both seem possible. That he told the officer he was an engineer was clearly a ploy, perhaps to justify why he might wander around viewing fortifications under construction at the time.

The idea that Gravel was insinuating himself with the Irish may well have been part of his remit to make himself appear as a friend. His true “vocation” as a cleric would undoubtedly have helped in allaying suspicions among Irish Catholic supporters of James II. At the same time, although he was French, he was not one of the French soldiers of whom Sarsfield’s supporters were critical after Lauzun’s departure. The very fact that Gravel had not returned with the fleet to France might have secured credit for him in Irish Jacobite eyes as one who could be trusted.

The reference to composing songs hostile to the French is a curious one on a number of levels. The Irish were very disillusioned with the French, as they felt they had been abandoned to face the might of the Protestant Williamite forces on their own, so the idea that songs insulting the French would be popular is entirely plausible. From a linguistic point of view, the songs were probably in English, given that Gravel almost certainly did not speak Gaelic, and songs in Latin or French probably would not have been understood well enough by Irish soldiers. Given references in his letter to conversations with Irish and English soldiers, Gravel surely must have had some reasonable command of English to be able to function in Ireland for so long.²¹³

The second is from Army Commissary Methélet on 19 April 1691, a reliable source as far as Louvois was concerned.

Il y a en cette ville un François qui se nomme l’abbé de Gravel, prestre. Il dit qu’il vous a mandé, Monseigneur, tout ce qui s’est passé en ce pays depuis deux ans qu’il y est venu. Il me paroît bien-intentionné, et ne vit pas cependant avec la commodité qu’ont ceux que vous employez. Je le crois en nécessité.²¹⁴

²¹³ This is not improbable even though his earlier career was mainly spent in German-speaking territories.

²¹⁴ Mulloy, *Franco-Irish Correspondence*, vol.II, p.271. Methélet to Louvois, 19 April 1691 (A1 1062). The writer can be identified as Jacques Methélet, described in 1690 as a Commissaire de l’Extraordinaire des Guerres for a Swiss regiment in French service. See E. Rott, (ed.), *Inventaire Sommaire des Documents Relatifs à l’Histoire de Suisse Conservés dans les Archives et Bibliothèques de Paris* (Paris, 1894), vol.IV, p.523.

Methelet related to Louvois what Gravel told him but expressed surprise that for someone who appeared to be in the minster's employ, Gravel's situation seemed precarious as regards his personal comfort. One could understand this in different ways: that he was in need, in common with the hardship endured at the time by Jacobites, or that he was in Louvois's employ but in some undercover capacity so a modest station was more becoming.

Interestingly, the Abbé de Gravel is mentioned in English source correspondence, and in their eyes his role is that of undercover agent. The most notable of these relates to the 1691 period between the departure of the French fleet from Ireland in autumn 1690 and the Battle of Aughrim in May 1691. These are the Finch manuscripts containing Nottingham's correspondence..²¹⁵

A letter from Gravel to Louvois describing fortifications in Galway was intercepted by Williamite forces and forwarded to Nottingham. In a letter to Henry Viscount Sydney dated 9 June 1691, Nottingham mentions this interception.

Your lordship may remember I gave you a long French letter of many sheets written by Abbé Gravel (if I mistake not the name) from Ireland. I have ask'd Mr Bridgeman for it and he can't find it. I should be glad to have it because it may possibly be of use and particularly at this time, for there is a plain discovery of the French designs to perswade the Irish to subject themselves to France, and is now beginning to be executed, by obliging the rebels to take commissions of the French king.²¹⁶

This reference could be to different ideas. One is the rumour in Ireland that the Jacobites were disenchanted with James II and would prefer to see Ireland independent of England and so move under French suzerainty. It could also refer to the fact that the French were taking Irish soldiers to France and some, like Justin MacCarthy, Viscount Mountcashel, specifically received French commissions as he was going to command a regiment of Irish troops in France. A letter from Gravel describing the fortifications would certainly have interested the French war minister. The works were being supervised by French engineers all sent by Louvois, so it would have reassured him on the strengthening of defences at Galway, Athlone and Limerick that the building was actually in progress.²¹⁷

²¹⁵ Finch, vol.iii , p.106.

²¹⁶ Finch, vol.iii p.106.

²¹⁷ Childs, *The Williamite Wars in Ireland*, p.367.

The next mention is in a letter from Nottingham to Dutch General Ginkel from 28 August 1691. This places it after the Williamite victory at the Battle of Aughrim and the death of French commander the Marquis de St Ruth, and the surrender of Galway on terms on 21 July. It clearly refers to Gravel having been apprehended by the Williamites. The words of Nottingham clearly show his suspicions of the captured cleric.²¹⁸

As to the Abbé Gravel, 'tis certain that he is a very dangerous man and, whatever he may pretend, he was certainly employed by Monsr. Louvois; and if he be not included in the articles granted to Galway 'tis fitt that he should be kept a very close prisoner, but you can judge how farr you can proceed against him, for he deserves no favour nor in the least to be trusted. Monsr. Ginckell ... has found the Abbé Gravel at Galway, whose long letter to Monsr. Louvois your lordship saw. He desires the King's protection and offers to turn Protestant, but I think he is not to be trusted nor will deserve any favour, and I have writ so to Monsr. Ginckell.

One would surely have to note that Gravel's offer to become Protestant and serve William III was a ruse, as indeed it was considered by his English interrogators.

Other sources that shed light on the Abbé's activities in Ireland include two separate French secondary sources commenting archival material in the Archives des Affaires Etrangères. The first mentions Gravel, as a source of information for Louvois on Ireland.²¹⁹ The second states that the Abbé was a *chargé de mission* in Ireland.²²⁰ It is not clear, though, whether this was a task Gravel had specifically been given by either Croissy or Louvois, or just extrapolated by later archivists. Gravel implies that he has been telling Louvois news of Ireland for the two years he has been in the country.²²¹ It should be noted that unlike D'Avaux and Lauzun, who had their letters encrypted, Gravel's surviving correspondence is not in cipher. While it is possible that this was a deliberate move, as

²¹⁸ Baron Godert van Reede van Ginkel (1644–1703), later 1st Earl of Athlone.

²¹⁹ J.J. Jusserrand (ed.), *Recueil des instructions données aux ambassadeurs et ministres de France depuis le Traite de Westphalie jusqu'à la Revolution Francaise*, XXV, Angleterre, Tome II, 1660–1690 (1887), p.433.

²²⁰ "Chargé de mission" is a term used in the *Inventaire sommaire des archives du Département des affaires étrangères*, p. 383, vol.1, (Paris 1903).

²²¹ If Gravel was still a diplomat, his superior would have been Colbert de Croissy as secretary of foreign affairs. However, Louvois did for a short time act as caretaker secretary for that department in 1679, between the departure of Pomponne and the arrival of Croissy. Closer contacts between Gravel and Louvois may date from then. As previously mentioned, Gravel wrote to Louvois from Mainz in 1672.

ciphering letters was time-consuming, it is more likely that he did not have a cipher.²²²

This perhaps could be applied to Gravel. Other means of hiding messages existed, such as writing in lemon juice, or simply using a series of multiple forwarding addresses, as used by the French agent in London writing his confidential letters to “Mr Pierret” in France.²²³

Spy or ambassador?

Gravel’s letter was published in Mulloy’s edition of the *Service Historique de la Défense* records relating to Ireland. Symcox had consulted this same correspondence for his 1967 thesis and mentions Gravel’s presence. He does not supply any meaningful background information, apart from surmising due to the content of Gravel’s letter that he was working for Louvois.

What is interesting is that in the autumn of 1689 there was a significant re-appraisal of “Irish” policy taking place in Paris. It was felt that D’Avaux, although still a respected diplomat, had reached an impasse in his relations with the notoriously difficult James II, and therefore it was decided to recall him. A document exists in the Archives des Affaires Etrangères dated October 1689, which lists ten or so possible successors to D’Avaux.²²⁴ The Abbé de Gravel is among the names. Presumably these names were picked for their experience and ability, and Gravel’s name was not just included because he was known to be in Ireland already.

Symcox states that this list remained a dead letter, as no ambassador was appointed to replace D’Avaux. This is true. No “foreign affairs” affiliated ambassador was appointed. Instead, the choice fell, for political reasons, to a French courtier well known to James, namely the Comte de Lauzun. It does not mean, however, that Gravel stopped whatever he was doing — far from it. It is equally plausible that Gravel stayed working as a lower-level functionary, supplying information. If the French were to keep supporting Jacobites in Ireland, then this was much needed in France, as it concerned the different factions, both Sarsfield’s and Tyrconnell’s, which threatened the unity of the Irish forces, France’s allies and guardians of their foothold in Britain on behalf of James II. Gravel could still have been attached to foreign affairs, as attested by the copy of the letter in those archives, but

²²² See a discussion below on the different French ciphers used, p.125-128. It is worth remarking that when D’Avaux was replaced by Lauzun, Louvois specifically requested that the ambassador hand over cipher keys to Lauzun for him to use.

²²³ Given the paucity of trade into Ireland at the time one would doubt the ready availability of lemons. See AAE, CP, Ang, 169–170, many letters. Also copies at AN in K1351.

²²⁴ AAE, CP, Ang, 169, f.239. Symcox also cites this; *Thesis*, p.301.

addressed his letter to Louvois on grounds that the information was of a military nature. One could say he was following the same division of responsibilities as seen in the division of D'Avaux's correspondence.²²⁵ According to Soll, it was Colbert in the Navy Secretariat who had greatly expanded French spying activities. From my own researches and Burger's work, it appears that this remained under their auspices, although this does not preclude the possibility that Louvois or Colbert de Croissy sent their own agents on specific missions.²²⁶

A key question regarding Gravel must be who sent him to Ireland. It seems probable that Gravel's role changed over the time he was in Ireland. It is my view that he started as part of D'Avaux's entourage. This certainly would have stopped once the ambassador was recalled, leaving in March 1690, as Lauzun arrived with French troops. It would seem odd that Gravel would not have been able to travel back to France, which implies there was an order to stay in Ireland.²²⁷ Practically, acting in an information-gathering capacity, would seem plausible, using his clerical role as cover. Certainly given Louvois's hostility to Lauzun (and D'Avaux's, it has to be said), it would have been useful for Louvois to have such a figure remaining behind. This could have been ostensibly in James's or more probably Lauzun's entourage.

When Lauzun himself then left with most of the French troops in September 1690 in d'Amfreville's fleet from Galway, Gravel's role might conceivably have changed again, this time to try to find out about the factions in the Irish army. He does specifically request orders from Louvois in his letter, perhaps underlining this role as a self-made one.

Why do more letters from Gravel not survive?

Although Gravel stated that he has been in Ireland for two years, only two or three letters from him are known to have existed and only one has survived: the one discussed above, dated 25 December 1690; an earlier letter of some 52 pages, which Gravel stated he sent to

²²⁵ Although to be discussed in Chapter 5, it is worth noting here that Louvois desired informants on matters deemed not his responsibility, notably items related to the navy and foreign affairs.

²²⁶ Jacob Soll, *The Information Master: Jean Baptiste Colbert's Secret State Intelligence System* (Michigan, 2009).

²²⁷ Instructions from Louvois to his correspondents contain exhortations to provide as much detail as possible to him about the situation in Ireland, be it at a military or administrative level and to give any other information they thought useful. If one takes this as a given across other ministries, it would follow Gravel's continued presence was desired.

Louvois at the start of November 1690; and a possible third letter alluded to in Finch's correspondence of June 1691 as intercepted.²²⁸

Given the length of time Gravel spent in Ireland, it seems likely that other letters were written and sent to Louvois. If so, what happened to them? It is possible that some were intercepted and never reached Louvois. Others, if they did reach Louvois, are not catalogued in the Service Historique de la Défense archives relating to Ireland as being from Gravel. It is possible that these were catalogued along with other papers and bound into volumes unrelated to Ireland. It is also possible, though speculative, to consider the idea that the content of this putative correspondence was somehow compromising to Louvois, perhaps because of comments relating to D'Avaux, Lauzun or James II himself, and that they were therefore destroyed.

It is possible that the correspondence exists in the Archives des Affaires Etrangères or the Service Historique de la Défense in documents not specifically relating to Ireland, as yet uninvestigated for Irish links.²²⁹ It should be noted regarding the timelines involved in Finch that by the time Gravel was captured at Galway, his master Louvois had died suddenly at Versailles. After that stage the trail of Gravel in Ireland is lost. He was released at some stage and made his way back to France. This would have happened after the October 1691 Treaty of Limerick, by which the Jacobite war in Ireland ended, and with it French involvement. Gravel probably returned on one of the many ships left Ireland carrying Irish Jacobite soldiers who had chosen to serve James II abroad.

An outline of some of his later activities is given above. Given that France was at war until 1697 with precious few allies, the options for diplomatic postings abroad were obviously limited. As already noted, at some stage Gravel was named as abbot of Argentan in Normandy, and it is possible that he spent many of his remaining years there.

Conclusion

From the investigations and letter analysis above, my own view is that Gravel travelled to Ireland in the entourage of D'Avaux. At some stage, he started to get involved in trying to understand Irish Jacobite politics and informed D'Avaux of these matters by word of

²²⁸ The letter in SHAT, A1, 2687 dated 1731 and signed by an Abbé de Gravel in Metz is in fact from Jacques de Gravel's nephew, Maximilien-Henri, at the time abbot of St Symphorian in Metz, and so not applicable here.

²²⁹ See a later chapter for analysis of Irish-related material I have found in Chamlay's correspondence.

mouth. When D'Avaux was recalled, Gravel's role might have changed, or changed emphasis, perhaps to spy on Lauzun for Louvois and then, when Lauzun left, to continue to tell Louvois of the conflicting currents in Irish Jacobite politics. It is likely that Gravel's purpose in Ireland was to stay among the Irish and, under the albeit legitimate cover of being a cleric, to gather as much information as possible about what was happening in Ireland and to send this in letter form back to Louvois. This is what can be gleaned directly from the surviving correspondence from late 1690. Gravel himself says he has been in Ireland since May 1689 and that he has been sending information to Louvois. It is not elucidated, however, whether this role had been a constant one during that whole period. What is clear is that his character is perceived as a strange one by other French officials and not clearly understood by them. They also notice that his activities and methods are unconventional and that he associates with the Irish Jacobites.

That his role was an important one was certainly believed by the Williamite authorities, as evidenced by their correspondence and their attitude to him once he was in their hands. It can certainly be said that his methods were perceived as unorthodox and that he seems to be most interested in gaining the confidence of the Irish to ascertain their desire to continue fighting.

This role seems to fit into a pattern for other conflicts where Louvois, always avid for information, tried to get as many people as possible to send him information about the situation on the ground in whatever campaign. Some were paid informers, spies or casual informants, as referred to in both Sarmant's and Brousse's articles.²³⁰ Others were like the *intendant* Jean-François de Fumeron, a valued employee of the Secrétariat de la Guerre. He was under no illusions that part of his remit was to write back often to head office to ask for advice and tell details of current events and any other information he was able to glean. From the evidence, however, Gravel seems to be acting in a slightly different manner, less as the official ambassador he had been earlier in his career and more like an undercover informant. Roosen described lower-level envoys as "second class diplomats, low in prestige and high in importance".²³¹ It seems likely Gravel falls into this category: a reliable information gatherer and skilful at often passing unnoticed.

²³⁰ Sarmant, "Les Turcs Font Merveilles" See also Brousse, « Les Reseaux d'informations de Louvois dans les Provinces-Unies et aux Pays-Bas Catholiques, 1679-1691 », *Revue Internationale d'Histoire Militaire*, 82 (2002), pp 57-77.

²³¹ Roosen, *Louis XIV and the Rise of Modern Diplomacy*, p.87.

In summary, I have been looking at two very different types of envoys, both of whom were sent to Ireland by the French authorities in the course of the Irish campaign between 1689 and 1691. Both individuals were there to serve Louis XIV as best they could, albeit in very different roles. Although they went about their tasks in different ways, the essential goals of their missions were the same: to implement French policy as best they knew it and to gather and send back as much information as possible to their masters, the ministers of the Sun King. will be looking at the roles of two diplomats who were active in Ireland over the course and who exemplify the range of functions the ambassadors could be asked to carry out.

This chapter shows the range of functions served by French diplomats in the conduct of the Irish campaign. D'Avaux is at the top of the range almost as a prime-ministerial figure; Gravel at the other end of the spectrum is almost functioning as a spy. Both are directly involved in officially supplying information to decision-makers in France, at a time when information from a remote though potentially important theatre was of key importance. As will be demonstrated in later chapters, this was not the only information circulating in France from Ireland. Other actors were also supplying information and strategic views on what could and should be done in Ireland. Others were involved in a propaganda struggle. Whose influence was paramount in these information wars, as well as military events on the ground, would ultimately decide the winners on events in Ireland.

CHAPTER IV – CHAMLAY AND SUPPORT FOR JAMES II: FROM SOUND ADVICE TO MANIPULATION

This chapter will concentrate on the figure of the Sieur de Chamlay through four of his documents, which come from the French army archives in Vincennes. The aim is to show that this key military strategist to Louvois and Louis XIV offered his advice concerning Ireland and James II on a number of occasions in the period 1689–1691. The involvement of Chamlay in Irish affairs has to my knowledge never previously been demonstrated in a published scholarly study related to the Irish context. Moreover, his views give new insight into the thinking on Ireland taking place in France in the first period of the Nine Years War. As will be shown, the choices proposed by Chamlay varied from sound military advice to manipulation of information and deception of individuals. Chamlay is a good example for this study as a whole, in the sense that his views exemplify the use and abuse of information in the context of French involvement in the war in Ireland in 1689–1691.

Historiographical introduction

Chamlay has been the object of some considerable focus in the past 40 or 50 years for anglophone scholars. Although Wolf recognised Chamlay's importance, it was Ronald Martin's thesis in 1972 that broke ground from a biographical point of view.²³² Since then, Chamlay has figured in the works of most major historians, especially those such as Lynn and Rowlands, interested by the formation of strategy in the later part of the reign of Louis XIV.

For francophone writers, his importance was recognised by Rousset in the nineteenth century and later by Corvisier. The most recent and comprehensive treatment of the subject and his broader place in the debates around military planning has been by Cénat.²³³

Much of the broader-stroke writing concentrates on Chamlay as strategist to Louvois and Louis XIV in the later wars of the reign, but his thinking about the Irish campaigns not been highlighted. Although elsewhere in this work I have consciously built on the research of Symcox, this is not the case in the present chapter. Symcox did not deal with Chamlay in relation to Ireland.

²³² Wolf, *Louis XIV*; Ronald Martin, *Chamlay* (UCal Santa Barbara, thesis, 1972).

²³³ Rousset, *Histoire de Louvois* (1862–1864), ; Corvisier, *Louvois*,; Cénat, *Chamlay* (Paris, 2011), See also Cénat, *Le Roi Stratège* (Rennes, 2010).

The question arises as to why Chamlay's advice and ideas relative to James II and the Irish theatre have hitherto stayed unexamined. Part of the reason is that, from the point of view of Irish studies, attention has been concentrated on papers dealing almost exclusively with Ireland. These are the registers and minutes at the *Service Historique de la Défense* dealing with the Irish campaign, which formed the material edited by Tate and Mulloy.²³⁴ Those writing about Ireland do so at a high level regarding the French and break little new ground on that front, as they are not their primary focus. Likewise, French writers do not focus on Ireland either, but do write about Chamlay. Indeed, the foremost modern writer on Chamlay, Cénat, does not consider Chamlay and Ireland in his biography or his wider work on strategy.

The papers I looked at are either in Chamlay's own private papers, from 1689 and 1691, or his campaign correspondence with Louvois, in later 1689 and 1690. Neither of these sources could be considered "Irish sources" in the sense of those mentioned above. They are contained either in private records or those relating to French campaigns in the theatre of the Rhine. However, before delving into the content of the writings, it is first useful to outline some details of the Chamlay's career.

Summary of Chamlay's life

Jules-Louis Bolé, lord of Chamlay, was born in 1650, the son of Alexandre-Simon Bolé, an army administrator and a client of the Le Tellier family who was ennobled for service to the crown during the Fronde.²³⁵ Chamlay's position of *maréchal général des camps et logis des armées du roi* had been purchased for him by his father in 1670. This post consisted of organising the army marches from one camp to another, ordering the clearing of routes to follow, as well as choosing a secure and suitable camp site.

His first campaigns were during the Dutch war of 1672–1678. Through his organisational skills and geographical knowledge, he was noticed by the great French commanders of his age, Turenne and Condé, both of whom praised Chamlay. In this way, he came to the attention of Louvois and then later Louis XIV. His other talents no doubt included certain social skills in navigating his way into the graces of great men. While not on campaign, he prepared summary books of the previous season's army campaigns, describing the

²³⁴ Mulloy, *Franco-Irish Correspondence 1688–1692*,.

²³⁵ Cénat, *Chamlay*, p.10. In 1655, Alexandre-Simon Bolé was named a Chevalier de Saint Michel. Cénat states, on p.180, that there are no known records stating that either his father or Chamlay were ever made marquis..

principal actions and giving basic maps, and submitted them to Louvois.²³⁶ These works were so well received that more formal versions were produced using high-quality materials, destined for the king's library. Chamlay is known to have worked on at least three or four of these which were much enjoyed by the king, and he participated with Racine in writing a propaganda account of the siege of Namur in 1692. Apart from this history writing, Cénat states that Chamlay started corresponding with his patron Louvois while on campaign from December 1672, with the communication ceasing only at the minister's death in July 1691.²³⁷

Chamlay's career stretched from the 1670s into the next century and ended with the death of Louis XIV in 1715. He was an exemplary individual, highly skilled in his own military domains, and was promoted by his patron Louvois. In this he bears comparison with Vauban. Through the war minister, he began to interact directly with Louis, becoming the king's principal military advisor after Louvois's death in 1691. Court historian Saint-Simon thought Chamlay was offered the secretaryship of the war department but declined it in favour of his patron's son, the Marquis de Barbezieux; although this reading is debated by modern scholarship.²³⁸ Whatever the case, from the time of Louvois's death Chamlay no longer went on campaign but remained at Versailles as principal military adviser to the king, becoming a type of modern-day army chief of staff.²³⁹ Later in the reign, he became interested in army reform and taxation and wrote a number of papers on those topics, although he continued his input to official "histories".²⁴⁰ Although he remained influential, he was to some extent sidelined from power until the king's death, dying unmarried in

²³⁶ With the help of his assistant, François La Prée,

²³⁷ Cénat, *Chamlay*, pp.26–27, argues that Chamlay's regular writing to Louvois may have started off as a manner of proxy communication between Louvois and Turenne when their relations were strained. Per Cénat, Turenne did not appreciate the close supervision advocated by Louvois.

²³⁸ Cited by Cénat, pp.105–107. Rowlands believes Chamlay did not have enough of a grasp of administrative detail for the post while Cénat argues Chamlay did not have sufficient social prestige or financial resources. See Rowlands, *Dynastic State*, p. 63; and Wolf, *Louis XIV* p.567.

²³⁹ Cénat terms him "chef d'état major des armées"; *Chamlay*, p.5. The strategist did accompany the king on his last campaign, the siege of Namur in 1692, and was sent on a number of diplomatic missions.

²⁴⁰ Cénat, *Chamlay* p.164. For Chamlay and La Prée's contribution to Racine's history of the Siege of Namur in 1692, see M. Virole, "Le Siege de Namur de 1692: l'Héroisme et la Technique", *XVIIe Siecle*, no.228 (2005), pp.467–468.

1719. Although a selfless servant to Louis XIV, he was never awarded any high office, which contributed to his relative obscurity until recent times.²⁴¹

Chamlay and the *stratégie de cabinet*

Chamlay is closely associated with the violence and destruction involved in the controversial sacking of the German Palatinate region in 1689–1690 and is seen as having been one of the primary instigators of this action.²⁴² He is also seen as a key figure in the so-called *stratégie de cabinet* policy. Although there are a number of theories as to what exactly the policy consisted of, suffice to say here that it relates to the question of how much direct control of military operations Louis and his advisors at Versailles attempted to foist on commanders in the field. If in the early part of the reign general strategy was elaborated by the king and his advisors before a campaigning season started while actual tactical decision-making was left to the military commanders in the different theatres, some historians like Lynn believe 1675 marked a change. Following the departure of Turenne and Condé, Louis XIV decided to involve himself more directly in the management of campaigns from Versailles. Historiographically this has also been a source of much scholarly debate: Lynn argued for greater direction from Versailles; Rowlands, on the other hand, understood the policy as being more of coordination with and not domination of commanders in the field. More recently, the debate has been added to by Sarmant and Cénat, with the latter unusually looking at navy command also.²⁴³

It seems clear from these scholars that the management of military operations and fortification construction from Versailles was the fruit of close cooperation between the king, and his war minister chosen advisors. Louis was adept at the practice of war through experience and study rather than through great ability. He thus clearly recognised that soliciting advice from senior figures, talented collaborators and army commanders mitigated the risk of bad decisions.

²⁴¹ He was eclipsed to some extent under Voysin after 1709. Cénat, *Chamlay* pp.6–7, 194.

²⁴² Cénat, “Le Ravage du Palatinat” (2005), pp.97–132.

²⁴³ This debate is relevant to this chapter only tangentially. Among the different schools it is not disputed that Chamlay was involved in advising on strategic decisions, so this paper takes that as a given. Wolf, Rowlands, Lynn and Rule all underline Chamlay’s influence. See Wolf, *Louis XIV*, p.407; Lynn, *Giant of the Grand Siècle*, pp.303–305; Rowlands, *Dynastic State*, p. 295; Rule, “France Caught between two Balances: The Dilemma of 1688” in Lois G. Schworer, *The Revolution of 1688–89: Changing Perspectives* (Cambridge, 1992). Rule praises Chamlay’s “prudent planning, his measured judgement and his honesty”; p.45.

Some of the advisors were individuals from the gentry or *robe* nobility, like Vauban and Chamlay respectively, whose exemplary merits had brought them out from under the direct tutelage of their patron, the Le Tellier family, and into direct contact with the king.

Sarmant identified Chamlay's close relationship with Louvois as one of a client-patron, which developed into a friendship.²⁴⁴ Wolf too emphasised the aspect of friendship in his succinct summary of Chamlay's role and abilities. "Chamlay, one of Louvois' best friends and important military advisers, was a man of many parts: a diplomat, a military strategist, a superb officer in managing the movements of an army."²⁴⁵

Therefore, although the Louvois-Chamlay relation may never have been on a completely even footing, it seems clear to Rowlands and Cénat that Chamlay had direct access to the king before Louvois's demise and that this was not simply via Louvois.²⁴⁶ Nevertheless, concerning Ireland, it will be shown that Louvois's views and those of Chamlay did not greatly differ.

Chamlay, James II and Ireland – the documents.

The following documents were all written by Chamlay and deal with French support for James II and what form this should take. The aim here is to give an idea of what Chamlay's views on James and the situation in Ireland were while the Irish campaign was either in preparation or in train. The documents are from different points over the period between 1689 and 1691. Two are memoranda from Chamlay's private papers and two are letters Chamlay sent to Louvois while on campaign.

Document 1 – Memorandum by Chamlay, January 1689

The first dates from 25 January 1689 (n.s.) and is in the form of a handwritten memorandum addressed to Louis XIV.²⁴⁷ In it, Chamlay advocates trying to showcase James as preparing an invasion of England, in order to deceive William of Orange and buy the French time for their own plans. One should note that as the document is from Chamlay's own papers, it is not certain that it was ever formally submitted to the king, although it may have been verbally presented.

²⁴⁴ Sarmant, *Les Ministres de la Guerre* (Paris, 2007), p.279. Sarmant also states that Chamlay had his own room in Louvois's great house at Meudon and was a frequent visitor.

²⁴⁵ Wolf, *Louis XIV*, p.537.

²⁴⁶ Wolf also terms Chamlay a close personal advisor and friend of Louvois; p.537.

²⁴⁷ SHD, A1, 2654, Papiers de M. de Chamlay, 1689-1691, folio 26 (original 24 having being overwritten later with 26). It is not certain whether the memos were written in collaboration with his assistant, François La Prée.

The context here is that the French desire for a limited war in Germany had backfired and they were facing a coalition of enemies, not least William of Orange. There was a fear that with William having established himself in England with greater ease than expected, the same fleet and Dutch soldiers might be used to assist French Huguenots and make a landing in northern France.²⁴⁸ To this end, Seignelay and Vauban had toured the coasts of Normandy and Brittany in January 1690.²⁴⁹ Urgent works were undertaken in several locations, including around the naval base at Brest, and steps were taken to strengthen local militia. Whether this was enough to deter a landing was unclear. Chamlay's memorandum, dated January 1689, starts with the writer's general view of James II.

Comme l'esprit vient rarement quand on a passé trente ans, et que j'ay eu l'honneur de connoistre le roy d'Angleterre a cet age, j'advoue ingenuement, sans luy manquer de respect, que je n'ay jamais este la dupe des beaux commencements de son regne.²⁵⁰

This is revealing in a number of ways. First, its frankness in assessing the abilities of James II is indicative of Chamlay's honesty in appraising a situation or person. Secondly, it attests to the latitude given to Chamlay by the king in return for good advice. Thirdly, its critical viewpoint is very much in line with Louvois's thinking on James, and although this could stem from the patron-client relationship, it is possible the two had similar views in any case.²⁵¹

The dating of the note is also important, as it situates the document during a period of serious consultation within Louis's governing circle as to what to do with James and how best to employ him.²⁵² Symcox states that some sort of French involvement in Ireland was being discussed in light of Tyrconnell's messages to James that he was holding Ireland in his name. To this end, the Chevalier de Pointis, a naval artillery officer, had been sent to

²⁴⁸ The possibility of a landing in France was considered by the English authorities on a number of occasions, and aimed at either the northern or the Mediterranean coasts. An actual landing did take place near Brest in 1692 but was easily repulsed. See K.A. McLay, "Combined Operations and the European Theatre during the Nine Years War, 1688–97", *Historical Research*, vol.78, no.202 (November 2005), pp.506–539.

²⁴⁹ Symcox, *Thesis*, pp.60–61.

²⁵⁰ SHD, A1, 2654, folio 24, 25 January 1689. Chamlay clearly refers to the putting down of Monmouth's revolt of 1685.

²⁵¹ See Symcox, *Thesis*, p.147 for the war minister's critical attitude toward James.

²⁵² Louis also used James in an attempt to improve his stormy relations with the papacy, but to no avail.

Ireland on a fact-finding mission and reported back favourably on Tyrconnell and his aims.²⁵³

Chamlay suggests that William's primary concern must be to consolidate his grip on the Three Kingdoms, as this was the only way for the Dutch to use English resources in the continental war with France. "Monsr. le prince d'orange doit avoir pour objet principal, sur lequel roule toute la fortune, une paix proffonde dans les trois royaumes d'Irlande, d'Ecosse et d'Angleterre ... pour avoir des homes et de l'argent de quoy faire la guerre ..."

To prevent William from realising this peaceful control, and gain extra time for military preparations, Chamlay suggests that the French should act quickly given that "il est essentiel de le troubler autant qu'il se pourra". Given that at the start of the Nine Years War it is clear that France had only expected a short, contained German campaign and was not prepared for a longer conflict, it was essential to stop or at least delay as long as possible active English involvement on the continent.

Chamlay's point of view is novel in the sense that it tries to use James's presence as a tool to sow disinformation as to what French plans were, in the hope that such information would find its way to England and cast doubt on attempting any landing on the coasts of Louis's kingdom. He proposes to use James's presence in France as a cat's paw, so that even if the French decided not to actually involve themselves in Ireland, it might be possible to make William believe something was afoot and so forestall English invasion plans of France. The suggestion is made to have James overtly visit the port of Le Havre, perhaps in the company of a general, to inspect ships there. As Le Havre was close enough to Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight, it might be possible to create the impression that some sort of invasion preparation was in progress.²⁵⁴ To complete the deception, and create confusion, the strategist further suggested that some English Jacobite officers be sent to the port of Saint Malo in Brittany, to sow a story that they would be making for Ireland or England. This ploy could make use of the possible presence of English merchants in either port — England not officially being at war with France — that such tales would be relayed to England.²⁵⁵

²⁵³ Symcox, *Thesis*, p.59. The memorandum Pointis penned on his return is in AN, Marine, B4, 68. The wording used is clearly based on Tyrconnell's contemporary letters.

²⁵⁴ SHD, A1, 2654, folio 26.

²⁵⁵ The Finch Mss. certainly refer to English agents acting as merchants in Le Havre in 1690. Finch iii, HMC.

The chief aim he states is to trouble the Dutch ruler in establishing himself firmly and prevent him from getting England involved on the continent. This, he argues, would cost the French almost nothing and also buy time for military preparations. This fits with Symcox's view that "Louis XIV had to find some means of occupying William's forces before they could be turned against the soft underbelly of France."²⁵⁶

Since disinformation was the main vehicle of this proposal, it is possible that Chamlay foresaw that some deception would be practiced on James himself, although it might have been impolitic to state this specifically. If a pretext was needed to send James to the coast to build rumours, it could have been found and James would have been none the wiser. Certainly contemporary commentators such as Dangeau and Madame de Sévigné state that there was significant contact between Louis and James in the context of possible expeditions to Ireland or England, so the background was there.

Regarding Ireland specifically, Louvois opposed any meaningful operations in Ireland for a number of reasons. The first was that from his perspective the continent was the only theatre that counted for France, as defeat there could threaten the kingdom, any other front being secondary. The second was that even if he had been in favour of Irish operations, like his brother he probably did not think much of James's abilities, so James was not the person to lead it.²⁵⁷ Thirdly, Louvois's relations with Seignelay were not cordial, so the war minister was not interested in any policy that could put the navy into the limelight, and operations in Ireland necessarily implied naval involvement.²⁵⁸

Although Chamlay's scheme was not followed by the French king, it is clear from events described in Symcox's thesis that there were many discussions around what advantage the presence of an exiled English monarch could give. The suggestion of actions that cost nothing would have been welcome, given that France was unprepared for a conflict wider than the defensive actions begun around Phillipsburg. Instead, Louis was convinced by Pointis and Tyrconnell that Ireland was a front worth opening. The French did send James

²⁵⁶ Symcox, *Thesis*, p.61.

²⁵⁷ Louvois's brother the Archbishop of Reims's withering comment is telling of French attitudes, and perhaps knowingly evocative of Henri IV: "Voilà un fort bon homme. Il a perdu trois royaumes pour une messe." Quoted in Voltaire's *Siècle de Louis XIV, Oeuvres Complètes*, vol.15, p.418. (Paris, 1818). Symcox in his thesis shows James was reluctant to go to Ireland.

²⁵⁸ Lenihan, P., *Conquest & Resistance*, (Leiden & Boston, 2001), p.17. Rowlands goes further and argues Louvois was not above hampering the war effort in pursuing personal vendettas; *Dynastic State*, p.62.

II to Ireland with money, arms, and some French officers, in the hope of distracting England from significant continental action, so for a time therefore French involvement was limited.²⁵⁹ In any case, in early 1689 Louis did not know the strength of all the enemies he would be facing, so resources had to be managed closely.

Naturally, the French expected William would himself send a force to subdue the island. This probability was catered for in the instructions given to the senior French officer being sent to Ireland in March 1689, Lieutenant-General Maumont. In the case of invasion, he could give combat to prevent the force from advancing inland and joining up with forces of disgruntled Protestants. Interestingly, the wording of the orders clearly implies that the decision as to when to give battle was up to Maumont. If combat was likely, the instructions suggest “*auquel cas, autant que l'on peut juger de loin de pareille chose, il semble que le meilleur party soit de le donner promptement...*”²⁶⁰

Thus while overall strategy for Ireland was discussed and agreed at Versailles, in cooperation with James II, tactics had to be modified when in Ireland.²⁶¹ The decision-makers in France knew they were too far away to know the situation on the ground. In contrast to the continental struggles, the notion of Versailles corresponding closely with and consulting commanding officers on campaign in Ireland was not feasible. The distances were too great and the relay of information was subject to delay through wind and tide, or indeed outright loss.

When Maumont was killed at the Siege of Derry, effective military command in Ireland fell to Conrad von Rosen. Some of Rosen's tactics and declarations, though acceptable perhaps in French service on the continent, were countermanded by James himself. Rosen must have felt himself hamstrung, but as Ireland was not “enemy territory” but the land of an ally, James's writ at least went that far. There could be no levying of “contributions” as

²⁵⁹ As Symcox states, the very presence of James II in Ireland confused the aim of the expedition, between an attempt at restoration and a holding operation to keep Ireland as a threat to William's flank. This, however, seems teleological, in the sense that had James been successful in crossing to Scotland, the French might well have increased support, or even organised an invasion force to cross to England. How many resources were applied to a theatre might depend on the success encountered there as well as its strategic importance.

²⁶⁰ Hogan, *Négociations*, p.10. The italics are mine. Symcox states that Maumont's instructions were drawn up by Louvois, although entitled as coming from the king; *Thesis*, p.72.

²⁶¹ Rowlands argues that Louis reluctantly agreed these matters with James; *Dynastic State*, p.287.

elsewhere or subjecting the civilian population to harsh treatment in the case of non-cooperation.

One example of this was during the Siege of Derry in 1689. Rosen suggested rounding up Protestant families and forcing them up to the walls of the city, to oblige the defenders to either admit them into the city and so quickly exhaust remaining food or leave them to starve in the no-man's land between James's besieging army and the city. James was outraged and said that had it been one of his own subjects who made such a suggestion, James would have had him hanged. It was clear that French military habits and tactics had to be tempered when acting on behalf of James II in Ireland.

Document 2 – Letter from Chamlay to Louvois, August 1689

It has been suggested that Chamlay was the real strategist behind a Louvois who admittedly was a master administrator, but whose grasp of strategic concepts was weak—an aspect, if true, that the minister was sure not to advertise to his sovereign.²⁶² Certainly Louvois and Chamlay wrote to each other often when both were not at Versailles, especially during wartime. In August 1689, Chamlay, on campaign in the Rhineland, wrote to Louvois giving his views on a variety of military matters, including what James II needed as regards assistance to defend Ireland. This is a document which to my knowledge has never been published, or referred to, in any printed primary works or secondary scholarship relating to Ireland.²⁶³

Chamlay's autograph letter was dated 24 August 1689 and was written from the French Rhine army camp at Lichtenau. The main body of the letter relates to the French efforts to hold Mainz against imperial forces and also the actions of the army commander, Duras, which Chamlay reports back to Louvois.

Chamlay does not mention the siege of Derry, so it is possible he thought it was still going on.²⁶⁴ In the letter, Chamlay suggests bolstering the untrained Irish levies by sending French troops to support them, as well as trying to fortify a number of large towns to oblige William III to besiege them, thus slowing any progress. Chamlay describes the forces under James as being just a "milice", echoing Pointis's original appraisal of forces amassed

²⁶² Rowlands's view is that Louvois was a great organiser but not an original thinker; p.62.

²⁶³ SHD, A1, 883, f.209–210. Chamlay to Louvois, 24 August 1689..

²⁶⁴ The city was relieved when a Royal Navy squadron broke the French boom across the Foyle and succeeded in reaching the city quay on 12 August 1689.

by Tyrconnell.²⁶⁵ This follows thinking expressed by Pointis in his memorandum of the Irish situation given to Louis and his ministers in February 1689, while they were considering how to support Tyrconnell in his attempts to defy William. Chamlay refers to James's success in Scotland (victory of Killiecrankie, 27 July 1689) but suggests that from what Louvois has told him of the strong militia element of James's forces in Ireland, military success would not continue without regular troops: "sans que le Roy n'y aura pas un corps de troupes regle, qui serve de fondement et de base pour la conduite de cette guerre".²⁶⁶ The reason for this was that the Irish militia was untrained and untested, so unless bolstered by shape and example given by French troops, the Irish forces would always be : "toujours mises en fuites par les troupes estrangeres reglees que le Prince d'Orange voudra y envoyer."

It is interesting that he suggested sending French troops, as this is something that was not to Louvois's liking, for reasons outlined above. Nevertheless, if it was decided by the king after consultation that sending troops was the course of action was to be followed, Louis would brook no opposition, and the war minister knew this. It should be noted that D'Avaux too had requested that French troops be sent to serve as a core around which the Irish forces could be moulded.²⁶⁷ As a respected strategist, Chamlay would have been aware of the overall shortage of troops the French suffered from in the early period of the War and notes how this weighed on Louis: "Le Roy a besoin de tant de troupes pour la defense de son pays et de ses places qu'il malaise".²⁶⁸ The fortification and garrisoning of strong points in Ireland is another area Chamlay suggests would be advantageous to James, as these could constitute a significant obstacle to William's forces once they arrived, which Chamlay predicts would be

lorsque l'arriere saison obligerait les armées de Flandres de se separer et de se retirer dans les places et alors il aura a sa disposition telle quantite de troupes hollandoises qu'il luy plaira pour descendre en Irlande.

Chamlay acknowledges that the risk to French troops involved in lengthy sea crossings is not to be discounted — "confier les bonnes troupes a la mer pour les transmettre dans un

²⁶⁵ Symcox, *Thesis*, pp.67–68. Pointis's memorandum is in AN, Marine, B4, 68

²⁶⁶ SHD, A1, 883, f.209–210. Chamlay to Louvois, 24 August 1689.

²⁶⁷ D'Avaux to Louvois, 6 May 1689, in Hogan, *Négociations* p.120. He also said he was impressed with the quality and physique of the Irish soldiers, but did not think much of their officers.

²⁶⁸ SHD, A1, 883, f.209–210. Symcox says in his thesis that full French mobilisation was not achieved until 1690;

royaume estranger au hazard de les perdre entierement” — but that victory there over William would constitute a singular reversal, “au plus cruel et au plus dangereux enemy qu’ait le Roy”. Recognising, however, that he is too far way to judge what is actually feasible, he adds that his idea is only a suggestion: “accepter ou pour le rejeter ainsi que l’on juge a propos”. Although the meaning can be taken at face value, the language used expresses deference and respect to Louvois, when the advice is a course of action the patron probably did not favour. In the end, it was decided by the king to send French troops to Ireland, although this was tempered by the proviso that James should send to France an equal number of Irish troops to serve in France.²⁶⁹

It is a possible critique of Chamlay as a source to say that the advice given is relatively orthodox and that it could have come from almost any general staff officer. If one’s own forces were at a disadvantage, and one was not to lose control of a territory completely with enemy forces in the field, then one could consider holding out in existing fortifications and living to fight for another season. Certainly, it took far more men to besiege strongholds than to garrison them.²⁷⁰ It was contemporary military thinking, strongly supported in France by Vauban.²⁷¹ His idea of linked fortresses forming a defensible border — the *pré carré* principle — was implemented by Louvois and was applied to France’s continental land borders at considerable expense. In an Irish context, what validates the advice was the fact that Protestant militia applied such tactics by holding Enniskillen and Derry for William and thus remaining a threat until the army of Schomberg arrived. For this study, however, the focus is not to judge Chamlay’s abilities as a strategist, so the topic is best left for scholars of military planning to evaluate.

In responding to news from Louvois that the French fleet had left Brest for the Channel, Chamlay naturally wished it all success and argued that a French victory would be a lesson to the haughty English and Dutch: “...qui jusques’ici n’ont pas concue une haute idée de la puissance maritime de Sa Majeste.” Curiously, the outcome Chamlay hopes might stem from naval victory over the maritime powers was not an invasion of England on behalf of

²⁶⁹ Dangeau, *Journal* (Paris, 1854), vol.3, p.31; entry for 28 November 1689.

²⁷⁰ In 1684, a French army of 30,000 men was sent to besiege the city of Luxembourg, held by a force of 3,400 Spanish soldiers. (Source: Luxembourg city guidebook to historical fort of Draï Echelen (Luxembourg, 2011).

²⁷¹ In Alsace in 1688, Vauban’s chain of forts in Alsace was not finished. These included the sites of Fort-Louis and Landau, designed to defend Strasbourg from attacks launched from the Imperial fort at Phillipsburg. In 1688, Louis XIV decided to besiege Phillipsburg, thus shutting the last so-called gate into Alsace. See Symcox, “The Outbreak of the Nine Years War” (1976), pp.186–187 and 197.

James II, but an idea probably closer to the thinking of his patron Louvois: “...la ruine totale de leur commerce pendant la presente guerre”.²⁷² There is no exhortation or suggestion from him that the fleet should be more actively employed near Ireland, but it is conceivable that as an army man he did not feel he had the knowledge to suggest a course of naval action. As mentioned, his patron Louvois did not wish for the navy to have a greater role, and he probably supported this. Symcox states that the navy was never seriously considered for an important role in Irish waters, due to either “excessive caution or strategic blindness” on Louis’s part.²⁷³

Document 3 – Letter from Chamlay to Louvois, August 1690

The third document under examination here is again a letter from Chamlay to Louvois, this time from 1 August 1690, while he was on campaign in Germany in the French army commanded by the Dauphin.

The general background for 1690 in a Nine Years War context was one of relative success for the French. They had secured a much-needed victory over the Allies at Fleurus in the Spanish Netherlands on 1 July, and this was followed up with naval success over an Allied fleet at Beachy Head on 10 July, thus opening a possibility of French invasion of England.²⁷⁴ The immediate Irish context for the letter, however, was defeat at the Boyne on 11 July, which in keeping with Chamlay’s previous writings was not altogether a surprise. “La mauvaise nouvelle que vostre lacquais nous avoit apporte nous avons jette dans une grande consternation, quoyqu’elle ne peut pas beaucoup nous surprendre...”.²⁷⁵

Some of the letter is spent discussing the rumour, true as it turned out, that William had been wounded at the Boyne.²⁷⁶ Chamlay says that intelligence he had from among enemy troops, even in his theatre across the river Rhine, was that William was dead and suggested this as the reason why William’s army did not pursue James as speedily as they might have. He does not hide his dismay that James had taken ship, although from the letter it is

²⁷² SHD, A1, 975, f.100–102, Chamlay to Louvois, 1 August 1690. Vauban too encouraged the “guerre de course” — privateering — as a naval tactic.

²⁷³ Symcox, *Thesis*, p.64.

²⁷⁴ John A. Lynn, *The French Wars 1667–1714: The Sun King at War* (London, 2002), p.10.

²⁷⁵ SHD, A1, 975, f.100, Chamlay to Louvois, 1 August 1690. It is arguable Louvois might have felt pleasantly vindicated in his negative opinions of James and Lauzun by defeat at the Boyne.

²⁷⁶ Chamlay always uses the term “le prince d’Orange” for William in this period.

not clear whether Chamlay knew James was bound for France or merely further along the south-west coast of Ireland to escape advancing Williamites.²⁷⁷

While the Boyne defeat was very serious for James's cause, Chamlay did not think the situation irreparable and concentrated on trying to assess options for James. He proposed that James retreat to a strong coastal fort and regroup. If well supplied, James could rally his supporters there and try to hold out until the end of the season.²⁷⁸ Again, this idea is reminiscent of his previous letter. Chamlay believed that William must pursue James in order not to "laisser la victoire imparfaite" but he urged James to rally his supporters, stating that if he were in James's place he would endeavour to "disputer le terrain aussie longtemps que je pourrais". This might force William to retire at the end of the season with a damaged reputation but also give hope to James's party in England and contribute to upholding James's martial reputation. Chamlay suggested that if the Jacobites were well enough supplied and able to defend their position for a month or two, this might oblige William to retire at the end of the season.²⁷⁹ Without such a defensive posture, evacuation might have to be considered: "S'il n'estoit pas praticable, j'embarquerais promptement non seulement les Francois mais encore tout les irlandais pour les amener en France."

Despite the "militia" nature of Irish Jacobite troops, Chamlay clearly did not think discipline and training was going to be a problem, suggesting that all they needed was to be

²⁷⁷ James boarded a French warship at Duncannon fort in the south-east of Ireland, and made firstly for Cork. There the ship joined others and made for Brest. From the content of Louvois's preceding letter to Chamlay, the minister had told of the outcome of the Boyne but not specifically of James's flight to France. Many contemporary commentators and subsequent historians have considered that James II's flight to France fatally damaged his reputation and that his embarkation after the Boyne was precipitate. Symcox in this thesis suggested it was Lauzun who had orders from Louis to prevent James from being captured by William and so pushed him to flee. James also thought Louis XIV was about to launch an invasion of England, as paradoxically it was a good time when Jacobite sentiment was at a height and the Williamites knew this. See Symcox, *Thesis*, pp.383–387. See Simms, "The War of the Two Kings, 1685–1691" in Moody, Martin and Byrne (eds), *Early Modern Ireland, 1534–1691* (1976), vol.III, p.496.

²⁷⁸ Chamlay, with his "encyclopaedic knowledge of European geography" was perhaps aware of the Irish coastal forts like Kinsale and Waterford, built in the reign of Charles II and had these in mind. Rowlands, *Dynastic State*, p.63.

²⁷⁹ It was advice which, with hindsight, showed itself to be correct. William's forces could not take Limerick in the time expected. The siege was lifted at the end of August and William left for England soon afterwards. The need to avoid a repeat in 1691 forced the Williamites to offer much better terms to the Jacobites than they had wished to, to be able to send troops to the continental struggle. See Mijers and Onnekink, *Redefining William III*, p.57.

mixed in regiments with companies of French soldiers. The Irish would follow the example set by the French and would do their duty.

A copy of Louvois's answer is in the same *registre* of letters, dated 7 August 1690. In it, he stated: "La proposition que vous faites d'embarquer beaucoup d'Irlandois est bien venue dans l'esprit du Roy". Due to transport difficulties, the war minister doubted they would arrive in time to make a difference in the current campaign, which is what the king wanted. Louvois also countered Chamlay's intelligence and affirms that his information is that William is not dead at all.²⁸⁰ As with all the Chamlay–Louvois correspondence mentioning Ireland, the discussion then turns to the Rhine front. Ireland, although of importance, is only one theatre and is not discussed in isolation.

Document 4 – Memorandum from August 1691

The last document to be considered here is a draft memorandum by Chamlay from 5 August 1691. Again, it should be stated that it is not clear whether it was ever given to Louis, either in written or verbal form. The date is significant, however, as it was written in the aftermath of Louvois's death on 16 July. The note begins with Chamlay describing his advisory remit from the king: "Comme vostre majeste me permet de luy exposer ce qui me passé par l'esprit, et que l'affaire de l'Irlande est publique".²⁸¹ As Rowlands says, Chamlay was a "mine of strategic and administrative ideas", so his suggestions might well have been even more welcome in the aftermath of the minister's death and attendant reorganisation of the administration between the king and Barbezieux.²⁸² The use of "publicque" might be a reference to the fact that at this time Louis had told James he would continue to support the Irish front.²⁸³

Conscious of the enormous effort the French forces had to sustain in the face of superior enemy forces, he advocates only sending the strict minimum of supplies. "Je suis persuade qu'il ne faut n'y faire passer des troupes en Irlande, ni y consommer nostre argent par des convoys inutiles."

²⁸⁰ SHD, A1 975, f.117. Louvois evokes news of William in the *London Gazette*, which he clearly believed.

²⁸¹ SHD, A1 2654, f.51 (previous folio number, in red ink indicated f.321), and following. Louvois's answer is in A1 975, f.117. Louvois to Chamlay, 7 August 1690. French support of the Jacobite cause was a subject of rumour at the French court.

²⁸² Rowlands, *Dynastic State*, p.63. He also cites other areas where Chamlay's views were not accepted by the king. See pp.177, 222.

²⁸³ Symcox, *Thesis*, p.298-9.

Following on from this statement, he returns to a concept of deception evident in the memorandum of early 1689 by suggesting that the commander of Irish troops already in France, Justin McCarthy, Viscount Mountcashel (1638–1694), be sent to Ireland as an influential messenger.²⁸⁴ Mountcashel had served in French forces in Holland in the 1670s and had been praised by D’Avaux for his noble manners and courage. More recently, he had commanded the Irish regiment which served with distinction in Savoy in 1690 under the Marquis de St Ruth, Mountcashel himself being wounded in action. Chamlay argues that Mountcashel was the right candidate to send to Ireland because of his qualities of “courage”, “esprit” and “naissance”. These made him an ideal candidate to persuade his compatriots, in unconquered Limerick especially, to continue resistance to William III.²⁸⁵

Mountcashel, Chamlay argued, had to be genuinely convinced of French willingness to continue support. To back this up, he should sail to Limerick with a ship fully laden with arms and powder and carry a small amount of money, namely 30,000 ecus — a small sum in the context of what had been sent before — and promises of further support to come. The reason, Chamlay underlines, that Mountcashel should believe the French desire to support the Jacobite cause actively is for him to be believed in Ireland. Significantly, the term he uses is “tromper” — to deceive. What is to be sent, though, is the actual limit of what the French should send, the bare minimum to keep morale up and the front going.

If the policy of disinformation was to be believed Chamlay clearly thought it clearly had to be tightly managed. To ensure the “promise” of assistance was echoed in Ireland by news from James’s court at St Germain, he advocated that the same deception should be operated in relation to James. The verb “tromper” is again used in relation to how to tell James and his queen of the French desire to see the Irish theatre sustained. This approach would ensure that while minimum assistance would be sent, it would be received with good grace.

It is worth underlining the recurring theme of saving money between the January 1689 memorandum and this from August 1691. Chamlay would have been aware of France

²⁸⁴ D’Avaux and French officers in Ireland all thought highly of Mountcashel. Although related to Tyrconnell, the two men disliked each other. See Murphy, *Justin McCarthy*, pp.26–27. St Ruth is said to have been impressed with the Irish force and was happy to command them. See Simms, *Jacobite Ireland*, p.197.

²⁸⁵ These terms might be translated as courage, spirit/intelligence, and breeding/nobility.

being under considerable financial pressure in the period of the war.²⁸⁶ Indeed, Symcox interestingly refers to Jacobite frustration at how little money Louis had sent in 1689 and 1690, although he argues that the lack of resources was due to their being sorely needed on the continent and not a Machiavellian desire to feed the Jacobites the bare minimum.²⁸⁷ When the two memos are taken together, however, the darker view seems to fit better. The strong impression given is that Chamlay, like Louvois, was not really interested in helping out James II, or Jacobite Ireland, and believed the money would be better spent at home. Again, it should be emphasised that in the end Louis did not follow Chamlay's advice and another convoy to succour Limerick was organised. Unfortunately for the Limerick Jacobites, this did not arrive in time.²⁸⁸ For the French, even this was not a disaster, as they gained about 12,000 Irish Jacobite troops, fulfilling a war aim for Louis XIV once James II was no longer present in Ireland.²⁸⁹

Ireland had not been the only "diversionary" front the French operated. Sarmant implies that the Rhineland offensive of late 1688 was partly launched to forestall imperial pressure in the wake of the Ottoman loss of Belgrade in September 1688. Other forms of pressure in favour of the Turks had been applied in previous years, such as French money sent to support the Hungarian rebel leader Count Thokoly.²⁹⁰

Conclusion

It is clear from the tone of both Chamlay's letters and memoranda that he was a hard-headed strategist who very much saw the Irish theatre as a diversion. In this, he largely shared the views of his patron Louvois. He clearly believed that James was the author of his own downfall, and that in the context of France finding herself in a difficult war against many enemies, no great expense or effort should be expended to assist his cause in Ireland, or elsewhere. Nevertheless, he saw James's presence as being potentially of use in the context of disinformation. He was frank in his advice and had no qualms in suggesting how one could manipulate army officers such as Mountcashel and indeed James himself in order to gain advantage for his king, Louis XIV. What should not be forgotten, however, is

²⁸⁶ This is evidenced in Louis's orders of December 1689 for the collection and melting down of large solid silver decorative pieces and furniture from all over France, including those from Versailles, for coinage. Dangeau, *Journal*, vol.3, p.33; entry for 3 December 1689.

²⁸⁷ Symcox, *Thesis*, p.63.

²⁸⁸ The French supply fleet, subject to many delays in France, finally arrived off Limerick on 22 October 1689, but the Treaty of Surrender had been signed on 3 October.

²⁸⁹ Simms, *Jacobite Ireland*, p.260.

²⁹⁰ Sarmant, *Lettres de Louvois à Louis XIV*, p.189. Wolf, *Louis XIV*, p.505.

that even if the advice offered was sound, or even original, it was up to the king to decide finally. In the case of Ireland, he did not follow Chamlay's proposals. This was perhaps because Louis felt a personal obligation to James II and also that campaigning in Ireland probably cost England much more than it did France.

CHAPTER V – HAVING THE QUEEN’S EAR: COURT POLITICS AND DECISION-MAKING ON JACOBITE IRELAND, 1689–1690

M.de Lauzun crut donc qu’il feroit un grand coup pour lui [Seignelay] et qu’il plairoit fort a Madame de Maintenon, de tirer l’affaire d’irlande des mains de M.de Louvois, pour la mettre dans les mains de M.de Seignelai. Il persuada si bien la Reine d’Angleterre, que cela fut fait.²⁹¹ (October 1689)

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to outline what can be told of the information relationships between and surrounding Mary of Modena (1658–1718) and the Comte de Lauzun (1633–1723) in the period between the arrival of the English royal family in France in December 1688 and January 1689 and Lauzun’s own departure for Ireland in March 1690.²⁹² This period and this relationship are crucial, I believe, to understanding the changing situation in Ireland and on the continent and how it affected royal policy towards Ireland.

Contextually, the dating of the events reported in the quotation place it in September and October 1689, as by the end of that month decisions had been made at Versailles regarding the management of the war in Ireland. James II and his forces were in the field in Ireland since March of that year. According to D’Avaux, writing to Louvois and others, James had not organised his army properly and had been wasteful of precious French resources sent over. Hostile Derry, inadequately besieged, had held out until relief came in July 1689. James, for some reason, had been shocked by the landing of a Williamite force under General Schomberg, which stayed on James’s northern flank in Ulster effectively blocked his passage to Scotland.²⁹³ Seignelay, although navy secretary, was not invited by Louis to

²⁹¹ Michaud (ed.) Madame de La Fayette, *Mémoires* (Paris, 1823), p.188-9 for October 168. My translation: “Lauzun believed that he would do a great deed for Seignelay and one which would please Mme de Maintenon if he was able to have control over the Irish campaign taken away from Louvois and have it given to Seignelay. He so influenced the Queen of England that it was done.”

²⁹² From a terminology point of view, I am going to use the conventional British term Mary of Modena to signify the second wife of James II. This makes it easy to distinguish her from other British/English Mary, her stepdaughter Mary II, wife of her deposer, William III. The French contemporary sources termed her generally “la Reine d’Angleterre”, while many of the contemporary English sources, obviously under the influence of the “new regime”, generally term her as “the late queen”, just as, after his departure, they generally term King James as “the late king”, as if they were dead.

²⁹³ Previously a Marshal of France, Schomberg had left France in the wake of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes and was by then in Dutch Service.

join the *Conseil d'En Haut* until late 1689.²⁹⁴ Lauzun, an opponent of Louvois, tried to use his influence to engineer some change in favour of Seignelay.

Historiography

This section will use the different elements in the opening quotation to explore what contextual background and other relevant evidence can be marshalled to understand what is behind this statement and how these events happened. If this seems ambitious from such a short statement, it is worth looking at the relevant historiography for inspiration. It is worth noting here that as the focus of this work is French support for Jacobite Ireland, most of the works below were consulted for those sections relevant to this area.

Both recent and older scholarship in relation to Ireland and France are problematic for our purposes.²⁹⁵ As historians write their studies with a strong focus, it naturally follows that some aspects of a topic, being more peripheral to their interest, are not treated with a depth sought by a reader with a different focus. This is true of the writing on the Irish theatre, even though there is a need for a cross-focus between France and Ireland. Symcox's thesis is an original exception to this. Historians write their books on their own chosen subjects and logically focus on that. The reader who is interested both in the chosen and peripheral subjects and on how they are interlinked is often left unsatisfied. As mentioned in the introduction at the start of this paper, there are only two scholars so far who I find bring that crossover gap regarding Ireland: Symcox, as already mentioned, and Conroy, who examined the French navy's charting and hydrography work in Irish waters during the time of the 1689–1691 campaign.²⁹⁶

As regards the quotation above, this is exactly the case. The four anglophone historians I have found who refer to it are Gregg, Rowlands, Childs and Symcox.²⁹⁷ They are all writing on different topics, but the quotation is useful for all as an example of what could be termed as "major themes" of organisation, command and ministerial influence in the French armies under Louis XIV. Rowlands is the clear exception I have found here, as he refers to the importance of the *dévôt* party and sheds useful light on inter-ministerial

²⁹⁴ Admission to the *Conseil d'En Haut* was by invitation of the king, and was not generally offered to younger secretaries of state.

²⁹⁵ I am not considering English or Scottish historiography, as they do not have great relevance to this section.

²⁹⁶ Jane Conroy, *Louis XIV, Galway Bay and the "Little Bougard"* .

²⁹⁷ Edward Gregg, "France, Rome and the Exiled Stuarts, 1689–1713" in Corp, *A Court in Exile*, p.25. Rowlands, *Dynastic State*, p.59, Childs, *The Williamite Wars in Ireland*, p.187, Symcox, *Thesis*, p.191.

rivalries.²⁹⁸ The French biographer Petitfils also uses it in his work on Lauzun, as does the Duc de La Force in his earlier work (neither use footnotes or endnotes).²⁹⁹ There, as before, this quotation is used as a means of confirming what was happening in a peripheral but influential milieu, somewhere removed from the author's own immediate subject matter. It is, however, more central to my interest and so worthy of further examination and dissection.

Prior to examining the detail of the quotation itself, it is clearly important to consider for a moment the general veracity of the author. From the point of view of a critical appraisal of the quotation, there does not seem to be any particular reason to doubt the veracity of the actual statement by Madame de La Fayette. Moreover it has been used by many scholars in their own works and so it is used. Implicitly one could say this tongue in cheek... this is the case given the number of historians, and students (like myself) who quote from her *Memoires* and use this particular one. Suffice to say at this point that I do not have any reasons to doubt the accuracy of the author's words. Moreover, I can count myself as standing on the shoulders of well-known scholars such as Rowlands and Childs, who have been happy to use it and take it as valid.³⁰⁰

Lauzun's background

As Lauzun plays a central role in the context of the above quotation, it is worth delving into his background prior to the Irish campaign to examine it and understand his motivations.

Born in Gascony in south-west France, Antonin-Nompar de Caumont (1632–1723) was the scion of a cadet branch of the ancient Caumont family. Having chosen a military career, he first joined the household of his soldier uncle, the well-known Marechal de Gramont, who then paid for him to train at a military academy in Paris. He saw action in 1657 where his immediate commander on was the future James II, then Duke of York, exiled in France because of Cromwell. In 1659, Lauzun (or the Comte de Puyguilhem, as his title then was) was presented at court via the Comtesse de Soissons, superintendent of the household of Queen Anne d'Autriche. It was through this link that he met the young Louis XIV, with whom he quickly developed a friendship. From this point his favour with the king grew

²⁹⁸ Rowlands, *Dynastic State*, p.55-60.

²⁹⁹ Petitfils, *Lauzun ou l'Insolente Séduction*, De la Force, *Lauzun, un Courtisan du Grand Roi*. See literature survey in Chapter I.

³⁰⁰ Lynn does not use it in *Giant of the Grand Siècle* nor indeed refer to Lauzun at all.

steadily, who, according to diplomat Ezechiel Spannheim: “l’honora meme de sa confidence, de ses bienfaits et lui donne des marques d’eclat et de distinction”.³⁰¹

The Gascon seems to have been endowed with both charisma and bravery and also had a deserved reputation as a Don Juan among the ladies at court. One of Lauzun’s affairs was with Madeleine-Fare, the daughter of war secretary Michel Le Tellier, newly wed to the Duke of Villiquier.³⁰²

In 1669, he requested the vacant role of Grand Maître de l’Artillerie. This role had great responsibility, including a force of 800 soldiers and servants, and required close cooperation with the war department and its new head, the Marquis de Louvois.³⁰³ As he was not on good terms with Louvois, Louis promised him the post on condition it was kept secret until the king judged the time right. Lauzun was unable to keep the secret, which somehow found its way to the ears of Louvois, who rushed to see the king. This was alarming news, not only because of the importance of the post but also because of the general attitude of Lauzun, a loose cannon in Louvois’s eyes if ever there was one. Moreover, Louvois is likely to have reminded the king he had been working closely to professionalise the army and to ensure army officers and nobles did cooperate with his ministry; Lauzun did not fit this new schema. Louvois knew that Lauzun, along with Turenne and Bellefonds, did not take kindly to the instructions emanating from the clerks of the war department. Finally convinced, Louis opted instead for the Comte de Lude, a soldier of merit and a trusted gentleman of the bedchamber.

Lauzun was furious and accused the king of reneging on his word. It was thought, according to Saint Simon, that Louis was going to strike him with the cane he was carrying, but he restrained himself and threw the cane away, preferring to have Lauzun sent to the Bastille to cool his heels for a short while.

Despite this effrontery, Lauzun still somehow managed to retain the king’s affection and favour. To compensate him, Louis made him Captain of the King’s bodyguards in June 1669, a position of great trust. It was in this capacity that on 31 March 1670, Lauzun

³⁰¹ Bluche, *Dictionnaire du Grand Siècle*, p.836.

³⁰² Wolf, *Louis XIV*, p.389. Erlanger, *Louis XIV* (London, 1970), pp.164–165. The Princess of Monaco later had a tiff with Lauzun. During a court dance, she dropped her fan and stooped to pick it up. Lauzun, dancing with someone else, contrived to wheel around and stand on her fingers.

³⁰³ See Rowlands, *Dynastic State*, p.120 on Louvois’s attempts to gain control over the *Artillerie*.

assisted his master in secretly ferrying away the newborn child of Louis and Madame de Montespan in the middle of the night to the home in Paris of the chosen governess, Madame Scarron, Françoise d'Aubigné. The child was Louis-Auguste de Bourbon, and went on to play a larger part in Lauzun's fate than he might have suspected.

Whatever his real qualities, Lauzun was always able to excite people's passions, either for or against him. At some point in this period, he came to impress the unmarried and immensely wealthy cousin of the king, Anne Marie d'Orleans, Duchesse de Montpensier (1627–1693), known as *La Grande Mademoiselle*. An unlikely friendship developed between the two, and before long she had fallen for the charms of the intrepid little Gascon, six years her junior. In December 1670, he agreed to marry her, no doubt with an eye to her titles. When she asked Louis's permission to wed, to general surprise he agreed.³⁰⁴ Almost at once, however, the king came under great pressure from many in his own family. It seems Queen Marie-Therese, his brother Philippe, Condé and Madame de Montespan all agreed that such an interloper could not possibly be allowed to marry into the royal dynasty and, perhaps more importantly, to acquire immense wealth which should stay in the royal dynasty.

Persuaded again to his public role, Louis rescinded the permission, to the great chagrin of Mademoiselle. Lauzun appeared unhappy but resigned to the royal will. To sweeten the decision, the king compensated him with a *gratification* of 500,000 livres and awarded him the prestigious right of *grandes entrees*.³⁰⁵ This symbolically important post permitted Lauzun access to the king's person without the requirement of being formally announced, such as at the *petit lever* or *petit coucher*.³⁰⁶ At Easter the same year, he was awarded the governorship of the Berry region and went on campaign with the king to Flanders. He was clearly still in the king's favour.

From the time of the foiled wedding, Lauzun had felt that Madame de Montespan was undermining him in the eyes of Louis, so when another court appointment came up, he asked for her help. She agreed, but secretly spoke to the king against him. Lauzun found out, apparently by hiding in the king's room while they were there together. Later on, he insulted her for her duplicity and called her dreadful names. When the king heard of this,

³⁰⁴ Erlanger, *Louis XIV*, p.180.

³⁰⁵ Petitfils, *Lauzun ou l'Insolente Séduction*, p.131.

³⁰⁶ For the lucrative importance of the *entrees*, see Rowlands, *Dynastic State*, p.44. For the uses of this type of "brokerage" at the court of Louis XIV, see S. Kettering's article in the *Historical Journal*, vol.36, no.1 (March 1993), pp.69–87.

he was furious and ordered Louvois to apologise to his beloved mistress within five days. The only response the king got was a letter from him setting out reasons for his conduct. On 27 November 1671, Lauzun was arrested and sent on a long journey to prison, to the sadness of the Grande Mademoiselle but no doubt to the relief of others. His place of incarceration for 10 years was Pinerolo, a remote Italian mountain fortress with a French garrison.³⁰⁷ Like Fouquet, the incarcerated Lauzun was exactly where the king — and Louvois also, no doubt — wanted him, namely out of sight, out of mind, and finally under complete control. They both had wanted him removed, but for different reasons: Louis perhaps because he realised he could not get Lauzun to control himself and Louvois because this was the last “royal favourite” and the only one who still thought the army reforms did not apply to him.

The key to his salvation was to be found in the riches of the Grande Mademoiselle. After years of her requests to Louis and Madame de Montespan, the price of Lauzun’s release was set. Only through making the little Louis-Auguste de Bourbon heir to some of her most valuable territories, such as the sovereign principality of the Dombes near Lyon, was freedom obtained for Lauzun. Even then, it was not complete, for he was bound to keep away from the royal court for the next few years, although he was permitted to live in Paris. Moreover, the Grande Mademoiselle, after being essentially robbed of her lands, was obliged to publicly name her heir, to much surprise at court. It was an act remembered for years afterwards by no less a person than the Princesse Palatine, Liselotte of Orleans, who remarked in 1688 in a letter to her relative: “[la Duchesse de Montpensier] a fait la sottise de donner son bien au bâtard pour tirer de prison son petit crapeau de Lauzun”.³⁰⁸

Lauzun and Seignelay

When Lauzun emerged from Pignerol, he naturally renewed his friendship with his great benefactress. Some historians in fact believe they marriedmorganatically in 1681 or 1682.³⁰⁹ While he later took impressive lodgings near Place Royale in Paris, she had the very fine Palais du Luxembourg in Paris, and he was a frequent visitor there when she was

³⁰⁷ Also jailed there at the same time was Nicolas Fouquet, the disgraced former *surintendant des finances*. He died there in 1680.

³⁰⁸ Princesse Palatine, *Lettres* (Paris, 1985), p.116. “She made the stupid mistake of giving her possessions to the bastard so as to free from prison Lauzun, her little toad.” Little did she know that the donations had been far from voluntary.

³⁰⁹ Like Louis XIV’s later marriage to Mme de Maintenon, this was never admitted to, though by 1684 even the Grande Mademoiselle had tired of his infidelities and ingratitude and banished him from her presence. Interestingly, Lauzun’s public marriage to Mlle de Lorge-Duras was in 1694, the year after Mademoiselle died.

not at Versailles. Despite the years of incarceration, Lauzun was just too restless to live a quiet life. On the lookout for new possibilities of regaining favour from the king, he was prepared to play a long game. It was there he had met on a number of occasions Jean Baptiste Colbert, Marquis de Seignelay, the new secretary of the navy. Lauzun persuaded the Grande Mademoiselle to put in a good word for him with Seignelay who then agreed to meet him separately. Seignelay later underlined to Mademoiselle how he had reluctantly met him, only on her insistence and that he was still wary of him. “Sans vous il y aurait longtemps que je lui aurois fermer ma porte; c’est un homme de mauvais commerce et ou il n’y a nulle surete.”³¹⁰

This was by no means a rare example of well-connected court nobles looking down on Lauzun and keeping their distance. Despite being out of prison, Lauzun was still very much out of favour. Even as late as 1685 no less a figure than Madame de Maintenon wrote to her wayward brother, Charles d’Aubigné, exhorting him not to associate with anyone not in favour at court. “Soyez sur vos gardes a Paris comme a la Cour, ne voyez guere M de Montespan ni M de Lauzun; on dira que vous cherchez les mecontents”.³¹¹

Nevertheless, Lauzun continued to seek out the protection and influence of Seignelay, and from the character of Lauzun it seems difficult to imagine other than that this was by design, knowing full well that the Colbert family were opponents of his old adversary Louvois.

Seignelay was also appreciated by Madame de Maintenon, though at the beginning she had less to do with him than with his two sisters, who were members of the *dévôt* set and were married to high-ranking court nobles. Later in the 1680s, he himself gained her favour, not least because after a rather debauched youth he had become much more religious, which doubtless pleased Louis’s morganatic wife. This *bienvaillance* could certainly not have harmed his career, despite the hostility of the war minister. As Rowlands says, “Anybody enjoying the support of Mme de Maintenon could expect considerable favour from the king – something that made the Le Tellier very uneasy”.³¹²

³¹⁰ La Grande Mademoiselle, *Memoires* (Paris, 1989).

³¹¹ Cited by de la Force, *Lauzun, un Courtisan du Grand Roi*, p.160.

³¹² Rowlands, *Dynastic State*, p.302.

From the time of Madame de Maintenon's secret marriage to Louis, which was probably in October 1683, the tone of the court changed to being quite religious.³¹³ This prompted Madame de La Fayette to remark at this time: "A l'heure qu'il est, hors de la piété point de salut à la Cour, aussi bien que dans l'autre Monde."

That Colbert's sisters were already part of the religious set augured well for Seignelay. One sister, Henriette-Louise, wed the Duc de Beauvillier, while the other, Jeanne-Marie, had married the Duc de Chevreuse.³¹⁴ These dukes, together with the charismatic priest François de Salignac-de la Mothe (Fenelon), later Archbishop of Cambrai, and spiritual director were seen as opponents to the Le Tellier family, and in later years of the reign were seen as promoters of some governmental reform. Fenelon was by this stage also a confidant of Madame de Maintenon herself. A mark of the esteem Louis XIV had for the virtuous Beauvillier, for example, was shown in 1688, when he was named as *gouverneur* or chief tutor to the children of the Dauphin, including the next but one in line to the throne, Louis, Duc de Bourgogne. Fenelon was later appointed as *precepteur* to the young duc.

It is interesting to note that, whether it was genuine or not, Lauzun himself became more religiously observant than he had been previously. In Paris, he was seen going on retreats to a nearby monastery in the company of his mother.³¹⁵ There is some evidence to suggest that his turning to religion had occurred in prison (which of itself is not surprising).

Whatever the reasons, it certainly could only have helped his eventual return to royal grace and favour at a time when at court such behaviour was fashionable.

When exactly Lauzun came up with the idea of serving James II in England is not known, but he was certainly restless in Paris and was known to want to go back to soldiering.

When he heard news of the accession to the English throne of James II, Lauzun must have recalled how they had both served under Turenne in Spanish Flanders in the late 1650s.

Lauzun therefore requested permission from Louis to travel to the English court and offer his services as an independent volunteer to the new English monarch. Permission was granted, and Lauzun travelled there in 1685, hoping to fight against Monmouth. Although

³¹³ Corvisier, *Louvois*. Louvois was probably present at the private ceremony. Rowlands, *Dynastic state*, p.60.

³¹⁴ Chevreuse is now generally recognised by some French as one of the few higher nobles regularly consulted by Louis XIV. Beauvillier was appointed to the Conseil d'en Haut in 1691, on the death of Louvois.

³¹⁵ De la Force, *Lauzun, un Courtisan du Grand Roi*, p.160.

he saw no action, he had been well received at court there, was admired for his charm and panache, and made a good impression on the English monarch and his wife.³¹⁶

The second time he travelled was in the autumn of 1688, when he must have known that James's position was not as strong as it had been on his previous journey. It seems likely that Lauzun travelled with Louis's approval this time and brought with him a sum of money for James.³¹⁷ He certainly sent back letters reporting on English affairs to Seignelay, who in turn read them to the king, who was following events across the Channel closely. In fact, Louis told Seignelay to tell Lauzun he appreciated his efforts, and that he was "tres aise d'estre informee par vous, de tout ce que vous apprendrez concernant les affaires d'Angleterre, elle est tres persuadee que vous y servirez tres utilement."³¹⁸

Whatever the exact details of Lauzun's letters, he surely stated that James's position was not at all as strong as it had been, but that the English king was happy to see him and consulted him on different questions. As events unfolded, James feared for both his own life and those of his queen and heir, and so decided, perhaps on Melfort's advice and in consultation with Lauzun, to send them to France for safety.³¹⁹

An action like this, requiring a mix of stealth and daring, was just the task for someone like Lauzun. With the help of Francesco Riva, a servant to the queen, and another Frenchman, the naval officer Sieur de Pointis who was in England on Seignelay's instructions Lauzun led the escape party to a yacht ostensibly reserved for himself to go back to France, which did not attract adverse English attention.³²⁰ By 21 December they arrived in Calais, the task having been accomplished with aplomb.³²¹ In the words of one historian, it was "the only

³¹⁶ They had both fought under Turenne in the late 1650s in his campaigns in Spanish Flanders.

³¹⁷ De la Force, *Lauzun, un Courtisan du Grand Roi*, p.162, mentions a sum of 20,000 pistoles. Gregg, in Corp, *A Court in Exile*, p.20, says a sum of 300,000 was sent to the French ambassador Barillon, to be given to him only if he thought James was winning. One supposes this might have been in the form of letters of credit, given the volatile political situation in England.

³¹⁸ De la Force, *Lauzun, un Courtisan du Grand Roi*, p.162. For text, see Campana de Cavelli, Seignelay to Lauzun, 25 October 1688. Seignelay's sign-off is friendly in tone and says he is mindful of Lauzun's interests. Lauzun is clearly in the Colbert camp.

³¹⁹ La Fayette, *Memoires*, refers to James asking both the Duke of Ormond and later Dartmouth to help, but they refused, saying they could not assist removing the heir from the kingdom.

³²⁰ Pointis's role both here and later in Ireland is perhaps worthy of closer scrutiny by future scholars.

³²¹ Symcox, *Thesis*, p.23.

efficient service in his life”.³²² James himself was in all probability allowed to escape from Rochester by a Prince William none too keen to have his father-in-law stay, and arrived on the French coast on 3 January.

This deed was greatly appreciated by Louis XIV, who received Lauzun at Versailles to personally thank him on 4 January 1689, a meeting Lauzun must have been dreaming of for years. Having first spoken to Seignelay, the hero of the hour was brought to see the king, who greeted him warmly for the first time in almost 18 years, saying “Entrez, Monsieur de Lauzun, il n’y a ici que vos amis.”³²³

This turn of events — notably the arrival of the English royals in France, but also the recovery of a man so utterly fallen from grace — stunned nearly all court commentators. With the installation of an exiled English court at the old chateau at Saint Germain, Lauzun was once again welcome there, though by a different monarch. To add to his social rebirth, and to the surprise of many at court, on 2 February 1689 Louis gave him back his right to the *grandes entrees* and allowed him a coveted apartment at Versailles itself, much to the chagrin of the abandoned Grande Mademoiselle.³²⁴

It is evident that at the start of 1689 Lauzun occupied a position of influence with the exiled English royals, which in all probability was out of proportion to his talents. Doubtless he was determined to make the most of this unexpected opportunity to regain favour with Louis XIV. The commentators of the time, such as Madame de Sévigné, attest to the changed position of Lauzun in the wake of his service in England, and they recognised that Lauzun again had favour with the king in a way that most of them had never expected to see again, so rare a case he was. The favourable impression of Lauzun likewise extended to Queen Mary of Modena, who considered herself greatly in Lauzun’s debt for having saved her and her infant prince from the clutches of William III.

James was so appreciative of the little Gascon that he was invited to dinner often. The exiled king was recorded as saying that Lauzun was his *gouverneur*, a surprising comment from a monarch implying a relationship of tutor to pupil.³²⁵ Whether James had fully recovered from the crisis of confidence he had suffered at the hands of his nephew is

³²² F.C. Turner, *James II* (London, 1948), p.439.

³²³ Sourches, *Memoires*, (Paris, 1884), vol. III & IV, p.4.

³²⁴ De la Force, *Lauzun, un Courtisan du Grand Roi*, p.170.

³²⁵ Mme de Sevigne, *Correspondances* (Paris, 1862), vol.III, p.485: letter to Mme de Grignan, 26 January 1689.

difficult to know. It should be noted in passing that James was also rather subservient to his other advisor and fellow exile, Lord Melfort.³²⁶

As Lauzun's luck would have it, the international situation for France in these opening months of the War of the League of Augsburg was such that this was a possibility, and Louis XIV himself also planned to make use of James on a grander stage. As Symcox states James's arrival was "providential", as it gave him a tool with which to stir up trouble for this unexpectedly strong foe at a time when he had few allies.³²⁷ In fact, in early January 1689 James received messages from Richard Talbot, Earl of Tyrconnell, his Lord Deputy in Ireland, stating that he was holding Ireland for James, but needed money and supplies to help him hold out. This prompted the French to consider what moves they could make. To this end, Seignelay sent the Chevalier de Pointis to Ireland to meet with Tyrconnell and assess the situation on behalf of the French themselves.

The French quickly put plans in place to launch an expeditionary force of Jacobites to Ireland, assured as they were at least initially of an easy landing. By mid-February it seems it had been decided that James would himself lead it and that, if successful, the scope was to be expanded, possibly to enable James to pass over to Scotland. Timing and secrecy were of the essence. The Parliamentary Convention in England had been meeting and was likely to offer the crown to William of Orange, so it was doubtless seen as an opportune time to land James within his dominions. At different stages of French planning, different individuals were involved, including James, Louis, Louvois, probably Seignelay, perhaps Colbert de Croissy and others. At some point in the planning, the undertaking seems to have shifted from being under the auspices of Seignelay to that of Louvois, but it is unclear how exactly this happened. Through James's influence, it was then decided that Lauzun should command the armed forces on his behalf in Ireland. By 22 February, the court commentator and diarist Dangeau said that rumours were circulating that the expedition to Ireland was imminent.

Sa Majeste demeura a Marly jusqu'a cinq heures et puis alla voir le roi d'Angleterre. Les deux rois et Monseigneur furent longtemps enfermés ensembles, et les courtisans croient que c'est pour regler le voyage du roy

³²⁶ See Symcox, *Thesis*, p.106 on Melfort and how he had gained a similar ascendancy over James.

³²⁷ Symcox, *Thesis*, p.84.

d'Angleterre en Irlande, ou l'on ne doute plus qu'il n'aille incessamment.³²⁸

When informed of this, possibly by James himself, Lauzun must have got what one could only describe colloquially as a rush of blood to the head. His first thought was to ask, via Seignelay, to be made a duke by Louis. Although Seignelay counselled against this “pre-condition” as it were, Lauzun insisted, but was quickly disabused of the notion by the king himself who answered him “tres rudement”. At that moment, it was decided that Lauzun would stay put and other commanders, Von Rosen, Pusignan and Maumont, would go to Ireland instead as James’s *de facto* military commanders. In compensation to Lauzun, and in recognition of previous services to his family, James, before his departure for Ireland, invested Lauzun with the Order of the Garter at a ceremony in Notre Dame in Paris. One can be sure that this was a moment of great satisfaction for Lauzun but might have rankled with Louis.

While James departed for Ireland, Lauzun was therefore obliged to remain in France. I believe Lauzun, still smarting over the foolhardy request for a dukedom, considered ways in which he could again work himself into such a position of favour that Louis would create him a duke at some point in the future. The route to that was surely clear to him, via James and his queen, as had been demonstrated amply and publicly in his receiving the prestigious Garter.

[Lauzun] n’oubliait pas pour autant les interets de la reine d’Angleterre. Il savait que son appui représentait un atout essentiel dans son retour en grace. Il allait la voir assez fréquemment a Saint Germain.³²⁹

Lauzun’s cultivation of the English queen’s court was a shrewd policy to pursue. Although the 55-year-old James II himself was not a character who attracted much sympathy,³³⁰ the same could not be said for his charming and beautiful 30-year-old queen. From her arrival in France, many court observers were taken were her natural beauty and dignity. The

³²⁸ Dangeau, *Journal*, entry for 22 February 1689.

³²⁹ Petitfils, *Lauzun, ou l’Insolente Séduction*, pp.285–6.

³³⁰ Louvois’s brother the Archbishop of Reims’s withering comment is telling of French attitudes, and knowingly evocative of Henri IV: “Voilà un fort bon homme. Il a perdu trois royaumes pour une messe.” This seems to be a cleric who valued realpolitik over the Catholic faith. Quoted in Voltaire’s *Siècle de Louis XIV* in *Oeuvres Complètes* (Paris, 1818), vol.15, p.418.

admirers included the Sun King himself, who stated that she had every quality a queen should have.³³¹

She was also very much appreciated by Madame de Maintenon, who approved of her genuine Catholic piety, fluent French and witty conversation. Madame de Caylus remarks how this appealed to her aunt. “Cette princesse avoit pourtant de l’esprit et de bonnes qualites qui lui attirerent de la part de madame de Maintenon une estime et un attachment qui n’ont fini qu’avec leurs vies.”³³²

It seems generally accepted that, in contrast to her husband James, the exile of Mary of Modena in France appears to have given her a new lease of life to her. This is especially the case while James was away in Ireland. Although the exiled queen leads a life of exemplary piety (witness her retreats to the convent at Chaillot), she also is able to cultivate and build upon an existing friendship, or perhaps even admiration, expressed by Louis XIV.

Gregg freely admits that in his view Mary had “virtually no experience” in politics prior to her arrival in France in December 1688 and yet once there had, by the time Melfort returned from Ireland in September 1689, assumed “a central political role”. No explanation is proffered as to how such a change had taken place in such a relatively short space of time.³³³

It seems possible however to understand this change and ascribe to the influence of Lauzun, who was able to advise her. He had the motivation to help her, the knowledge of the court, and access to Seignelay, who was on good terms with the *dévôt* circle, as previously noted, of Madame de Maintenon, Seignelay’s sisters, Fenelon and the Ducs de Beauvillier and Chevreuse.

I believe that Lauzun actively guided her, giving insights into matters relating to the different people at the French court, the functioning of ministerial government and, crucially, whom to influence or gain the confidence of in order to further the cause of her

³³¹ Gregg states that James and his queen had only a few real supporters in the entourage of Louis and that these were Madame de Maintenon and Jean Talon, *secrétaire du cabinet du roi*. See his discussion of Lauzun and Mary of Modena, pp. 16-19 in the context of the Jacobite court. Praise by Louis for Mary of Modena and the favourable impression she made at court is cited in letters of both Madame de Sevigne and Elizabeth d’Orleans.

³³² Caylus, Madame de, *Souvenirs* (Paris, 1986), p.105.

³³³ Gregg, p.24.

deposed husband. James would no doubt have been in charge of this prior to his departure to Ireland, but it is conceivable that Lauzun was able to inform them both. Moreover, once James had left, her role was more important and not less so. She clearly received correspondence from Ireland from James and more especially Tyrconnell, who wrote to her regularly enough with much news of the Irish situation and many a shopping list of what ammunition, monies, arms and clothes were needed there most urgently.

From the observers and commentators in the French court and references in Tyrconnell's writings, it seems possible to put forward the scenario of the probable information flow which requests from Ireland followed. Both James and Tyrconnell were writing to Mary of Modena at Saint Germain. Mary also had private audiences with Louis XIV, who came to see her at Saint Germain, and she transmitted the requests she had received to the French king. He then in turn passed on the information, but perhaps not the letters themselves, certainly to Louvois and others, perhaps to Seignelay too. Louvois's clerks could then process the requests and organise the sending of supplies. This flow would explain the comments which appear in Tyrconnell's letters to Mary of Modena, stating that the goods they received in Ireland "we owe certainly to your great prudence, and that great influence you of right have over that great King".³³⁴

The Queen would write to James and Tyrconnell in Ireland stating what had been agreed, or sometimes, what she thought had been agreed with Louis. For his part, James wrote to his queen and both Lauzun and Seignelay, these were sent directly from Ireland but not always via Saint Germain.³³⁵ Certainly Tyrconnell clearly thought that his correspondence with the queen was confidential and that what he said privately in correspondence was not shared. In early November 1689 he had echos from d'Avaux that his – Tyrconnells' views – were known in France – and was taken aback at this. "I confesse I do not well comprehend, especially it being sent to your Majesti alone and noe necessity to exposing it; for how should the Ministers there know what I had writt to your Majestie."³³⁶

This is a curious sentence and may well imply either that Mary of Modena was divulging things private to the Jacobite cause to the French, or that the *cabinet noir* of Louvois — famous for intercepting correspondence as it transited through the hands of the postal service, a service also directed by the war minister — was perhaps at work, intercepting

³³⁴ Tyrconnell to the Queen, 20 October 1689 (o.s.), Tate, *Letter-book*, p.101

³³⁵ Dangeau, *Journal*; entry for 11 March 1689. Seignelay received letters from James from Brest also.

³³⁶ Tate, *Letter-book* p.109, *Annalecta Hibernica*, Oct 1932, IMC, Dublin.

and reading messages sent to and from the Queen before relaying them onto their proper destination. It would have been logical for the French to do this type of verification as they strongly suspected the exiled court at Saint Germain had been infiltrated by English spies. In fact it was a point of tension between Saint Germain and Croissy among others that the French were reluctant to give passports to either supposed Jacobites coming from England or to real Jacobites returning to England on behalf of James II. The references to the meetings between Louis and Mary sometimes come from Louvois's Irish correspondence, especially when the French learned of plans about which James had written to the Queen but which did not coincide with French strategic concerns.³³⁷

Sa Majeste [Louis] a appris avec surprise par une lettre de Milord Tirconnel pour la Reyne d'Angleterre, que laditte Reyne luy a fait voir, qu'il croye que le Roy d'Angleterre doit passer incessamment en Angleterre et qu'il n'y a d'autre moyen pour restablir ses affaires. Sa Majeste n'est pas persuade qu'une pareille desmarche convienne.³³⁸

This comment, along with others, would seem to cast doubt on Corp's assertion that Louis XIV's visits to Saint Germain to Mary of Modena while James II was on campaign in Ireland were just "courtesy visits".³³⁹ While some probably were, many others were clearly of a practical, "business" nature, on the basis of consultation between allies. Furthermore, D'Avaux himself believed such conversations were taking place. In May 1689, he wrote to Louis complaining that the lack of organisation in the Jacobite forces in Ireland was such that all was lost unless the king spoke to Mary of Modena:

Si Sa Majeste n'y met la main, et n'a la bonté de faire parler à la Reyne d'Angleterre d'une telle manière qu'elle oblige le Roy de la Grande Bretagne à mettre ordre à quelque chose, ou à souffrir qu'on le mette.³⁴⁰

Another role Lauzun decided to give himself, possibly in agreement with Seignelay, was to avenge himself on Louvois and D'Avaux, both of whom had opposed his initial appointment to Ireland. By mid-1689, D'Avaux and Louvois seemed strongly in control of

³³⁷ Dangeau in his *Journal* also mentions many visits by Louis to Mary of Modena between James II's departure in March 1689 and his return in July 1690.

³³⁸ Mulloy, *Franco-Irish Correspondence*, vol.I, p.47, Louvois to Lauzun, 10 June 1690, A1 960.

³³⁹ Corp, *A Court in Exile*, p.158.

³⁴⁰ D'Avaux to Louis, 12 May 1689, in Hogan, *Négociations*, p.136. D'Avaux suggests that "If His Majesty (Louis) could speak to the Queen of England, she could ask James to organise things in Ireland, or permit the French to impose order". My translation.

the Irish campaign. Lauzun therefore, according to the quotation at the head of this chapter, set his sights on wresting this control from them and putting it into the hands of his ally and French patron, Seignelay. With the prospect of having to supply Ireland and fight the combined maritime strength of England and Holland, Seignelay must have felt that here was the stage upon which the Navy could achieve great and lasting glory, and achieve stability of financial resources into the future, regardless of what subjective opponents of the navy such as Louvois might whisper in the king's ear. He knew he needed greater resources; the Irish theatre necessarily required seaborne assistance and supply. This in turn obviously put the navy into a greater position of importance than a purely land-based conflict on France's borders would have. Whether Seignelay was privy to Lauzun's intrigues I have not been able to discover. Suffice to say that it was likely that any fallout from a blow to Louvois's prestige could only benefit the Navy and himself.

The tactics Lauzun used to obtain his aims are those of a man who perhaps feels he has little time to use. His strategy was twofold: first, to have D'Avaux recalled to Ireland somehow by damaging his reputation as much as possible; and secondly, to persuade Louis, no doubt via proxy conversations through the ears and lips of Mary of Modena, to have Louvois rescind control over the Irish campaign by giving more influence to Seignelay.

The main evidence for our knowledge of events here is admittedly from an interested party, or rather the injured party himself. From about June or July 1689, D'Avaux stated that in letters he received from friends in France he heard about ugly rumours circulating at court in Versailles about how he was mishandling the situation in Ireland. The friends told him who was spreading the slanders: Lauzun.

Lauzun seems to have gone about his aim in a typically hardnosed fashion. As almost a professional courtier, he must have decided that the most effective way of advancing himself was perhaps to be sent to Ireland. He seems therefore to have decided to attack the conduct of the ambassador to Ireland and his handling of the situation there. This he seems to have done through spreading malicious gossip at court. As there are few historical records pertaining to this conduct, it is difficult to be certain, but the extant evidence points to this as a plausible scenario. That this type of scheming was an element of his character seems to have been quite widely known. James II's natural son, the Duke of Berwick (1670–1734), who spent time on campaign with Lauzun in Ireland, said that he had a

malicious streak which made him a redoubtable foe: “He turned everything to ridicule, and wormed out the secrets of others and played upon their foibles.”³⁴¹

Lauzun, back at court in Versailles, made his Machiavellian allegations against D’Avaux and the rumour machine probably did the rest for him, by making ugly rumours uglier. From July 1689 onwards, D’Avaux’s friends wrote to him recounting what they were hearing, that Lauzun had in fact been bad-mouthing him at court by saying that it was his fault things in Ireland were not going well.³⁴² Lauzun certainly had heard enough elements of the real story from Mary of Modena to make his allegations sound plausible. By early autumn, a clearly worried D’Avaux felt obliged to write to Louis stating that he was doing everything the king wanted and was advising James sensibly, but that Lauzun was “un homme qui me veut diffamer de gayete de coeur.”³⁴³

Against this backdrop, other information was coming to the notice of Louis. At the end of July, ships of the Royal Navy broke the Foyle boom built by the men of the Chevalier de Pointis and had relieved the city. The Jacobite forces, badly depleted, withdrew in disarray, with Rosen doing his best to keep them in some sort of shape. James — probably tired of hearing too many home truths as regards his not organising the defence of Ireland against Schomberg’s forces, through either training troops or establishing adequate magazines — railed against both Rosen and D’Avaux in letters back to Mary of Modena, who in turn informed Louis. James II wrote to Lauzun in June 1689 asking for the recall of Rosen.³⁴⁴ Tyrconnell bemoaned the battles of persuasion James’s queen was obliged to wage in order to get what was needed for her husband’s cause in Ireland and this in the face of what they perceived as opposition from Louvois. “As to the supplies which wee are to have ... it is grievous to mee to see you exposed to fight battles against that powerfull man there [Louvois].”³⁴⁵

By autumn 1689, the situation on the continent started to deteriorate for the French. From the Palatinate arrived news of the unexpected capture of Mainz by Imperial forces on 11

³⁴¹ J.H. Jesse, *Memoirs of the Court of England During the Reign of the Stuarts* (London, 1857), p.320.

³⁴² Symcox, Thesis, p.189. Symcox says Lauzun’s conduct regarding D’Avaux is that of a “shifty backstairs politician”.

³⁴³ Cited in Symcox, Thesis, p.196. D’Avaux to Croissy.

³⁴⁴ Another letter in James’s own hand, in French, preserved in NLI, Ms 41770, and dated 16 May 1689 may be to Lauzun, but this has not been verified. James expresses the hope “that you could be at our side, so I will write something to the Queen”.

³⁴⁵ Tyrconnell to the Queen, 20 October 1689 (o.s.), Tate, *Letter-book*, p.101

September, with some 5,000 French troops taken prisoner. The city had been lost because the French defenders did not have enough gunpowder, and it was Louvois's responsibility to oversee that fortifications had enough supplies. Louvois admitted in a letter to a subordinate that strategically it was a serious loss.³⁴⁶ Added to that came similar news of the fall of Bonn on 10 October.

With these events, Louis perhaps thought that his colossus of a war minister suddenly had feet of clay. Moreover, in relation to Ireland, and prompted by James II and Mary of Modena, Louis XIV had letters sent to Rosen and D'Avaux saying that they were to be recalled to France. On 4 October, it was announced that Seignelay, secretary of the navy, was called to the *Conseil d'En Haut* and so was to be a minister.

On 29 October it was announced that the king had decided to send 7,000 French troops to Ireland to assist James under the command of Lauzun. Louvois had not been told about it until the decision had been made by the king. It seems generally agreed among scholars that Louvois did not think that either James or Ireland were worth the bones of a French grenadier and, moreover, that France should be concerned only with defending its land borders, and concomitantly not "wasting" money on Seignelay's navy. Tyrconnell, obviously apprehensive at the coming of Lauzun, summed up the situation in a letter to Mary of Modena:

That he [Lauzun] is an enemy to monsieur de Louvois, and he not friend of his; for madam what can the king [James] expect from him of business (as the French say to me here) at a time when his enemy is desired so earnestly to be employed here without a word being said to himselfe about it, and that the king of France could not refuse our king to send Monsieur de Lauzun when he desired it.³⁴⁷

If Louvois thought he had been outmanoeuvred, he was not the only one. The reaction from D'Avaux was anger, but as he was the consummate servant of Louis XIV, there was no choice but to do as he was told. All he could do was to write a letter to Colbert de Croissy, the minister for foreign affairs, stating his fears.

Le Roy me dit bien que M de Lausun [sic] alloit venire, j'apprehende que cela ne m'attire icy bien des affaires. Tous les François icy ont vescu

³⁴⁶ Corvisier, *Louvois*, p.458.

³⁴⁷ Tyrconnell to the Queen, 20 October 1689 (o.s.), Tate, *Letter-book*, p.101.

jusqu'icy dans une grande union. Je demande toujours l'honneur de
vostre protection car je vois bien que j'en auray besoin.³⁴⁸

Despite this news it took a long time for the decision to be implemented, for D'Avaux to leave and Lauzun to arrive. In fact this did not happen until April 1690. This was possibly due to the time needed for Lauzun to prepare himself and his troops, the lateness of the navigating season and the work needed to ready a fleet. One of the items which no doubt required careful consideration in France was what orders Lauzun should have for Ireland.

Louis XIV's instructions to Lauzun regarding the possible death of James II in Ireland

Gregg, in an otherwise very informative essay suggests that there was no discussion in light of the first stroke James II suffered in 1701 about what to do regarding policy when he died: "Surprisingly there seems to be no evidence that the French government seriously considered what action, if any, it would take should James II die".³⁴⁹ There is an indication though of Louis's frame of mind in Franco-Irish correspondence from 1690.

Admittedly, Gregg here is talking in relation to a possible French reaction to the June 1701 Act of Settlement. During the Irish War of 1689–1691, James II, with French assistance, came in arms into Ireland, so it was possible James himself could become engaged in the fighting and be killed. It was therefore logical to plan for such an eventuality. That this planning did take place is evident when one considers written instructions given to Lauzun in February 1690 before his embarkation for Ireland. It is possible to conjecture that this situation had been overlooked by the French in March 1689 when James originally went to Ireland and was rectified only when news came from Ireland in autumn 1689 that James was with his army in the field and facing the Williamite force under Schomberg, with an engagement probable. It is equally possible to think similar instructions were given to d'Avaux and have not survived or were given verbally.

When the French changed their senior commander in Ireland and were preparing for Lauzun's departure in early 1690, this again came to the fore. The fact that it was contained in a separate letter from the rest of the instructions could be interpreted in a number of

³⁴⁸ AAE, CP, Angl. vol.169, f.208. This quotation is written in D'Avaux's own hand at the end of the letter, while the rest of the text was evidently written by a clerk.. D'Avaux stated that the king had told him Lauzun would come to Ireland "I believe this will cause me a lot of problems". My translation.

³⁴⁹ Gregg, "France, Rome and the exiled Stuarts, 1689-1713", p.58 & p.162.

different ways. The first is that the instruction was literally an afterthought when the previous orders had already been composed and formally written out by clerks. The more likely possibility is that they were deliberately put on separate sheets. This might be convenient in case others were required to see instructions regarding what Lauzun was set to do in Ireland, while what to do in case of James's death was to be kept secret and shown only if it actually happened.³⁵⁰ The letter, preserved in minute-copy form in the French army Archives at Vincennes, was printed as part of Mulloy's *Franco-Irish Correspondence*.³⁵¹

Le Roy ayant observe que l'instruction qui a este dressee par son ordre pour le sieur comte de Lauzun ne fait point mention de ce que ledit sieur comte de Lauzun auroit a faire au cas que le Roy d'Angleterre vint a mourir, quoyque Sa Majeste espere que cela n'arrivera pas, elle a neantmoins juge a propos de luy faire scavoir qu'il devoit en ce cas faire tout ce qui pourroit despendre de luy pour faire proclamer Roy en Irlande M. le prince de Galles.

This is *prima facie* a clear statement of policy as regards what to do if James II died while on campaign in Ireland. The idea of having such a policy was important in the sense that in war such eventualities were of course possible. It is equally plausible to consider that if James II died in Ireland, Louis almost certainly would not have stopped the Irish campaign due to its strategic use as a threat to William's flank. It is clear from this it would have continued, officially in the name of 'James III' and *de facto* as a necessary distraction to William III. In the same way that James was not able to go to Scotland with forces while Derry was holding out against his forces, so William III could not conceivably move so many English troops to Flanders if a Jacobite army were still in Ireland. From a policy point of view, this instruction states that it came from the king himself and this is entirely consistent both with self-interest but also the influence of Queen Mary of Modena. It is widely held that she was much more active in France trying to maintain support for her husband James in Ireland than her contemporaries had expected, not least because she was also championing the cause of her own son.

³⁵⁰ The other, originally composed instructions have not survived in the Army archives. The reference in the folios merely states that the minutes (or copy for home records) which should have been included was not to be found in that file but were in the office of a senior clerk at the War Department, Elie Dufresnoy. It might have been sent there to be encoded.

³⁵¹ Mulloy, *Franco-Irish Correspondence*, vol.I, p.23. Louvois to Lauzun 17 Feb 1690.

What follows is also a statement of policy as regards Ireland and relates to both previous French political dalliances and the internal Jacobite politics of which Louis had become aware. The next piece of the instruction is a reference to what discussions and strategic possibilities had taken place in the past:

et comme il se pourroit faire que les Irlandois tesmoigneroient de l'inclination a se soumettre plustost au Roy qu'audit Pince de Galles, par plusieurs raisons qu'il est inutile de reporter icy, l'intention de Sa Majeste est qu'en ce cas-la ledit sieur comte de Lauzun s'explique que le Roy, n'ayant eu d'autre but dans la depense considerable qu'il a faite pour soustenir l'Irlande, que de proteger un Roy son allie, contre l'usurpation injuste de son gendre, ne peut consentira depouiller son fils.³⁵²

Even before the “Glorious Revolution”, there had been some political and diplomatic contacts between, on the one hand, Tyrconnell and James II as regards the future treatment of Irish Catholics and, on the other hand, between Tyrconnell and the French foreign minister Croissy, via Bonrepaus. These discussions were around what might be termed the “constitutional” status of Ireland and changes to this as regards being an integral part of the realm of the Three Kingdoms. The contact between James and Tyrconnell were, of course, normal and ongoing, and centred around the extent to which James was aware of and supported Tyrconnell’s pro-Catholic and pro-Old English policies and implementations.

As at this point, in 1686–1687, James had no surviving legitimate son, it was expected that his Protestant daughter Mary and her Calvinist Dutch husband Prince William of Orange would come to the throne when James died. The subject of their discussions, according to John Miller in his well-known article³⁵³ was what protections could be implemented for Catholics in Ireland or what policies were available to safeguard Catholicism in the face of expected Protestant opposition and possible retrenchment under the heirs presumptive. One of the proposals Tyrconnell had put to James had been to grant some greater form of independence to Ireland when James died. Another possibility discussed was to choose an ‘Irish’ successor at the moment of James’s death, for example the Catholic Duke of Berwick, and request French protection.³⁵⁴

³⁵² , *Franco-Irish Correspondence*, vol.I, p.23. Louvois to Lauzun 17 Feb 1690

³⁵³ John Miller, ‘The Earl of Tyrconnell and James II’s Irish policy, 1685–1688’, *Historical Journal*, vol.20, no.4 (December 1977), pp. 803–823.

³⁵⁴ John Miller, ‘The Earl of Tyrconnell and James II’s Irish policy, 1685–1688’, p.808.

To summarise, this instruction is a noteworthy indication of the state of mind of Louis XIV as regards James II in 1690. Going beyond strategic considerations, it underlines the emotional bond which existed between the French king, James II and Queen Mary of Modena, and her confidence that Louis would support her son, the Prince of Wales, in the event of James II's death.

Conclusion

It is my contention that although Lauzun was a maverick character and had taken some foolhardy actions in the past, he knew how the French governmental and court system worked, or rather could be worked. His actions imply that there were alternative channels of influence and persuasion outside the ministers and royal councils. Seignelay's family attachment to the religious wing at court and favour specifically from Madame de Maintenon and his opposition to Louvois, were key to Lauzun here. With the right alliances and allies, this influence was deployed to push for a desired result. It does not seem to me, however, that the influence would work were the king to be opposed to the change. If, as above, Louis had decided to change his representatives anyway, events had merely conspired to ease the way. It is clear, however, that if Lauzun was reckless and foolhardy in some instances, - and as the Irish campaign revealed not a very good commander - in others he could be Machiavellian and very effective.

The last word can be left to the ghost-writing author of the *Life of James the Second*, who almost seems to have been inspired by the words of Madame de La Fayette.

Her Majesty, not knowing but he [Lauzun] might be as great a General as he affected to appear, made choice of him for this expedition and perhaps with a view to doing an agreeable thing to Madame de Maintenon in whose good esteem he was at that time, tho' in a contrary intrest to the great Minister Monsr de Louvois who probably apprehending, that should he prove successful in this entreprize, it might raise his credit again with the King his Master (whose favorite he had formerly been).³⁵⁵

³⁵⁵ J.S. Clarke, *The Life of James the Second*, vol. II, p.388. (London, 1812).

CHAPTER VI – CORRESPONDENCE AND INTELLIGENCE

This last section examines the mechanics of the flow of information and its processing. It deals with three interrelated topics. First, it explores how the French sent, received and protected key information. Secondly, it looks at how the French and British treated intercepted correspondence. Finally, it considers how these strategies changed as the war progressed and the French sphere of influence in Ireland shrank.

From an historiographical point of view aspects of the following works are relevant to the focus of this synthetic study. Soll gives a useful background to the development of the French secret service system which was developed under Jean Baptiste Colbert. From Burger's work on Renaudot it seems that overall responsibility for gathering intelligence, certainly in relation to assisting the Jacobites, stayed under the Secretary for the Navy, namely Colbert de Seignelay who died in 1690 and then Pontchartrain, beyond my scope. Nonetheless there was certainly intelligence gathering carried out under the auspices of other ministries, witness the intelligence reports which are in the French diplomatic archives. For a British back ground to this area I have used Marshall and to a lesser extent Hopkins.³⁵⁶

Interception of Williamite/English correspondence

Interception of Williamite correspondence by Jacobites in the course of the war in Ireland, or vice versa, mainly depended on either sheer luck or local intelligence — or a bit of both. These elements are possibly the reasons why treatment of this subject by scholars writing on Ireland is patchy. Both Simms and Childs mention incidences of letters being intercepted by each side. Apart from this, it is difficult to gain any real idea of how organised any interception might have been. Gravel, in his letter to Louvois, mentions strategic correspondence being intercepted by Jacobites.³⁵⁷ Sarsfield, as a popular figure for Catholic Ireland, seems to have been able to gather local information from locals. One

³⁵⁶ Soll, J., *The Information Master: Jean Baptiste Colbert's secret state intelligence system*, (U. Michigan, 2009). Burger, P., "A study of the papers of the Abbé Eusèbe Renaudot", in Cruickshanks, E. (ed.) *Ideology and conspiracy: Aspects of Jacobitism, 1689-1759*, (Edinburgh, 1982), Marshall, A. *Intelligence and Espionage*, Hopkins, P., "Sham Plots and Real Plots in the 1690s" in Cruickshanks, *Ideology and Conspiracy* (Edinburgh, 1982).

³⁵⁷ Gravel to Louvois, 25 Dec 1690, in Mulloy, III, p. 166–167.

specific example is the intelligence he obtained leading to his successful Ballyneety raid on William III's artillery train at the time of the first siege of Limerick.³⁵⁸ Although Jacobite militia raiders known as "rapparees" sometimes captured enemy messengers, as the Williamites gradually strengthened their hold over the island, this means of intelligence acquisition must have become more difficult. Indeed, it would have become more likely that Jacobite letters would fall into hostile hands. The Williamites were probably better organised from an infrastructural point of view and so able to avail of the postal service, such as it might have been in time of war. The use of couriers seems more likely.

As the Royal Navy expanded its sphere of activities, the situation at sea gradually turned against the French and Jacobites. It was more likely in later 1690 and much of 1691 that French ships carrying Jacobite correspondence would be intercepted. As the war deteriorated from their point of view the French clearly wanted to use ports more out of reach from the Royal Navy. It is perhaps in this light that their surveying and mapping of the coastline near Limerick and Galway could be reviewed. That said, the French were clearly conscious of the importance of intercepting ships and capturing mail themselves. Although beyond the scope of this paper, a French royal ordinance of 16 December 1692 awarded prize money to naval captains who handed over mail trunks or letters found aboard captured vessels.³⁵⁹

The interception of French correspondence

From a purely practical point of view, the desire to know an enemy's views, plans and strengths pushes the combatant powers to engage in intelligence-gathering activities. In time of war, officially accredited ambassadors and their attendant "information-gatherers" were often sent home from hostile powers, obliging countries to find other sources. Regularly these sources took the form of spies, sometimes disguised as merchants, sending written correspondence. Their enemies knew this and responded by trying to tap into an enemy's information channels. This could be done by capturing either messengers or ships carrying messages, perhaps furnishing decisive information for the progress of a campaign.

From the start of the Irish War, the Jacobites were in regular communication with the French and their own contacts in England, Scotland and beyond. James knew he needed

³⁵⁸ Childs, *The Williamite Wars in Ireland* (2007), p.268; Simms, *Jacobite Ireland*, ..

³⁵⁹ Cited by P. Burger, "A Study of the Papers of the Abbé Eusèbe Renaudot" in E. Cruickshanks, *Ideology and Conspiracy: Aspects of Jacobitism, 1689–1759* (Edinburgh, 1982), p.117.

communication channels to be open between Ireland and Britain so as to send and received intelligence so he resisted as much as possible French requests for him to grant privateer commissions against English ships. He only relented on this point in 1690 when it was irrelevant due to the state of war which had existed between France and England since 1689. The French also tried to counterbalance this loss of Jacobite intelligence by promising to send to James, via d'Avaux, and later Lauzun, any sensitive information acquired by their own agents abroad. An example of this related to English naval activity. A French agent in England, "Mr. Parent", confirmed in a coded letter sent from England that William III had issued orders to stop ships travelling between Ireland and Scotland and had ordered Royal Navy ships to the Irish Sea to enforce it.³⁶⁰

At the same time, the French were themselves keeping up a constant stream of correspondence, ranging from purely military matters between army administrators to diplomatic efforts being waged by the Comte D'Avaux. These were put aboard the warships and supply vessels that crisscrossed the seas between France and Ireland on a fairly regular basis between March 1689 and October 1691. In early 1690 it was normally every 15 days that French ships travelled with letters.³⁶¹

It was crucial to both sides in the war, between Jacobites and French on the one hand, and the new Williamite regime on the other, to gain intelligence of the other side's designs and projects. It is evident from perusal of Nottingham's correspondence that he played a key role in supervising both the acquisition and analysis of intelligence and captured enemy correspondence. This covered both trying to trace and intercept enemy messages, either domestic or foreign, and also to some extent (although not within the purview of this paper) assisting in secret service actions carried out by the new regime in Britain and elsewhere. It also involved seizure of messages en route by capture at sea. This method of seizing letters was highly dependent on the English (or sometimes Dutch) being lucky enough to, first, have vessels encounter French ships and, secondly, for those to be strong enough to take the enemy ship, and not be taken themselves by a larger French man-of-war.

Securing French communications to and from Ireland

³⁶⁰ AAE CP Angl. 170 f.36, Mr Parent to Croissy, 26 Apr. 1689.

³⁶¹ A1 960, Louvois to Lauzun, 23 Feb 1690.

The French, for their part, tried to ensure some security for their correspondence in a number of ways. The first was for the sender of a letter to send a number of copies of it, generally in triplicate, as clearly the more copies sent, the bigger the likelihood that the addressee would get at least one of them. The Marquis de Louvois, as French war minister under Louis XIV, instructed his correspondents in Ireland to mark the packets, A, B and C and to send them via different ships and sometimes different messengers. In this way, he would know how long the letters were taking to reach him and whether some never arrived or consistently arrived late. This could prompt investigations as to why some channels were reliable and others perhaps were subject to interference.

Another precaution was to ensure regularity of deliveries. In February 1690 Louvois told Lauzun that Louis had ordered packet ships to go to Ireland every 15 days from Brest. So that this would not take up too many ships, those in Ireland should stay for 15 days and then return, not waiting for letters, so as to avoid having all the ships either in France or in Ireland. Lauzun was advised to tell this to James II, to ensure there were always letters going between Ireland and France and always ships available to carry it.³⁶²

Lastly came the security of having letters encoded. The main three French government secretariats involved to some extent in the war in Ireland, namely war, the navy and foreign affairs, all had standing instructions to encode sensitive data using the numeric codes that were available at the time. Interestingly all three areas used different codes. These were given to those officials travelling to Ireland so as to be able to write back to their respective masters in confidence.

Correspondence and concealment

Turning away briefly from correspondence directly received, it is worth considering those letters received from informants and agents abroad. For the French these were both Jacobites in Britain gathering information on behalf of the exiled court at St Germain, or indeed their own agents sent to spy.

For such an agent in hostile territory the most common way to put off unwanted interest in the letters was to make them inconspicuous in their destination. Both sides, French and Jacobites on one, and British on the other, used the concept of multiple addresses. This consisted of posting a letter under separate covers via successive merchants, either directly

³⁶² Mulloy, *Franco-Irish correspondence*, vol.I, p.24, A1 960. Not all ships carrying letters were navy ships.

in the employ of a power, or sometime *bona fide* businessmen acting as casual informants. Thus a letter might transit via a number of addresses before it reached its final destination. Addresses used were often in trade hubs such as the Netherlands.

An example of the practical side of this activity is given in the French diplomatic archives. In a letter to the French foreign minister, Colbert de Croissy, the secretary of Louis XIV's cabinet office, Jean Talon requested that Croissy send him a list of the fake names and addresses under which agents in England and elsewhere sent their news to France. Once he was informed of this he stated he would send one of his employees to the post office when deliveries arrived to collect any letters so addressed.³⁶³

While Soll underlines Jean Baptiste Colbert's control of the overall intelligence gathering apparatus, it seems that after his death no other minister gained such pre-eminence. For Burger, Colbert de Croissy seems to have been the successor as regards gathering intelligence in the 1690s though his was not a monopoly. Each secretariat had their own agents and carried out information gathering activities according to its needs. This division is reflected in the number of actors in Ireland sending news back to their respective hierarchies.

Given that the Jacobites and French did not control all the island of Ireland, however, there was a risk in messengers travelling overland before they got to a seaport where a French ship might be docked. It was in this way that a first breakthrough for the English authorities came in late June 1689, when Williamite Ulster militia apprehended a courier being sent to Dublin from the French naval artillery officer, Bernard-Louis de Saint Jean, Baron de Pointis who was posted at Londonderry.³⁶⁴ The letters were forwarded to Nottingham for examination. Realising their possible significance and that they were in code, he had his staff send them to Dr John Wallis.

It was of the essence to view any correspondence or question any agents as might be intercepted as quickly as possible. The messages that came into British hands by whatever means were routinely sent to Nottingham's office in his role as secretary of state in

³⁶³ AAE, CP, Angl. 170, f.38-9.

³⁶⁴ Pointis is an unusual figure and not without importance in the French plans for Ireland. He had been in England in 1688. After Ireland, he continued quite a successful career, and was involved in a number of high-profile engagements, such as Beachy Head in 1690 and the siege of Carthage in 1697.

England. For Jacobites in Britain, their letters transited through the post offices and so risked being stopped and examined by specially appointed officers there.

For the French correspondence, the likelihood of intercepting courier vessels out at sea, or indeed of capturing messengers on land, was largely a question of chance. Nottingham, however, tried to establish a rule that any packets or letters found on enemy vessels should be sent to him. An example of this is his letter to the mayor and aldermen of Weymouth from August 1690, clearly requesting that any letters found on board French vessels should be sent, unopened, to the secretary of state's offices at Whitehall.³⁶⁵

Even when discovered, stopped letters were quite often found to have been encoded. In this case, Nottingham relied greatly upon the services of Dr Wallis (1616–1703). He had been professor of mathematics at Oxford since 1633 and was quite elderly by this period. He had gained quite some experience in decoding secret messages under successive English governments, from Cromwell transferring seamlessly to Charles II and then William III. His job was to examine the letters sent to him and try to send back whatever he discovered to the secretary of state's offices. The process of decoding and the subsequent acting on information revealed were matters considered of utmost importance and were treated at the very highest levels of government of the new regime. Nottingham discussed recently deciphered correspondence with King William, who on more than one occasion had a financial bonus sent to Dr Wallis for services rendered.³⁶⁶ How exactly all the letters came into Nottingham's hands is not always specified but obviously Wallis was not required to know that.

Wallis set to work on the numerical codes over the next weeks and was at first apprehensive of his ability to decode them. By 1 August (o.s.), he had succeeded in breaking the code and, no doubt relieved, sent Nottingham a final transcript, stating that "I have met with better success than at first I could promise your lordship or myself and with more expedition than I could hope for." Nottingham in turn updated Schomberg and then wrote to the king with the news Wallis had discovered. The letters revealed that Pointis had been in command of an artillery battery based at Culmore Fort above Derry and had been

³⁶⁵ CSP, Domestic, 1690-1691., p.89.

³⁶⁶ Wallis successfully decoded French diplomatic letters being sent back from their envoy in Poland in 1689 and 1690, for which he received at least two payments of £50 from William. British Library, MS 32499, Wallis letter-book, f.208. I consulted these on microfilm in NLI under pos754. It contains a number of encoded and Seignelay and Louvois letters, as well the text of the deciphered versions.

wounded in action. It further revealed that he was the architect of the boom across the River Foyle, which had frustrated Royal Navy efforts to break the siege of Derry.

Writing to Seignelay, Pointis firstly described the boom he had designed, how it was constructed and where it was. Secondly, he complained bitterly to the minister about lack of ammunition for his cannon. He details how, when requested cannon balls and fuses were delivered to the French gunners before Derry, they discovered that only 120 out of the 500 requested had been sent, that the shot was mostly the wrong size for the guns they had, and that the fuses were almost unusable. Pointis clearly believed this was done deliberately, as he had requested those in charge of ordinance in Dublin to test the shot and fuses.³⁶⁷ This sensitive information was transmitted by the Secretary of State to King William in a note dated 2 August (o.s.). ‘The enclosed is Mr Pointis’ letter to Monsieur Saigneley [sic] unciphered by Dr Wallis by which your Majesty will see how easily Londonderry might have been relieved.’³⁶⁸

By the time this data became available, however, news had reached William via Schomberg that Derry had in fact been relieved by ships from Kirk’s squadron. Even if in the event the information decoded from the letter did not prove as timely as it might have been, the episode proved once again Dr Wallis’s usefulness to the new regime. If they were fortunate enough to intercept more French correspondence, this must have increased the confidence of the British government in their efforts to gain strategic advantage over their opponents.

The arrival of William III and his forces in Ireland in June 1690 and their military success at the Boyne, severely curtailed Jacobite lines of communication within Ireland. The subsequent capture of Kinsale and Cork also restricted the ports from which they could operate. Thus, for both supplies and information from France, they were increasingly restricted to those on the Western seaboard, Limerick and Galway, as farthest from the lengthening reach of the Royal Navy. By mid-1690, more active Williamite marine and terrestrial forces made it more likely that Jacobite and French messages and intelligence would be intercepted.

³⁶⁷ CSP, Domestic, 1689–90, p.218.

³⁶⁸ HMC, Finch ii, p.233.

In the aftermath of the Boyne and the general disarray of the Jacobite forces' retreat from Dublin, the Williamite forces came upon some correspondence at the lodgings of the Marquis d'Albeville, Ignatius White, an advisor to James II.

A great heap of letters has been taken in the lodgings of the marquess Albeville, who fled on Wednesday to Kilkenny. The letters are yet unopened to Count Lozune, etc but one from James Porter sets forth how 30 French ships were dispatched up the Channel to do us mischief. The wind happens now to be extreemly in their favour, soe as his Majestie is full of apprehensions therein.³⁶⁹

This is an example of the double-edge in discovering enemy intelligence. While the seizure of the letters was a boost for the Williamites the news that French ships were on their way into the Channel was clearly worrying for new king William and may have been an extra factor in prompting his return to England. From his point of view it was more important not to be blockaded in Ireland so he resigned himself to leaving Limerick in Jacobite hands, which prolonged the Irish war by another season.

Also discovered were "severall French pacquets newly received... And therein found letters from Monsieur de Louvois which by His Majesty's commande I here inclose, in hopes Dr Wallis may expound what mysterys may lye therein."³⁷⁰ Southwell, as secretary to King William, sent these to Nottingham in a letter dated 9 July (o.s.) written from their camp on the outskirts of Dublin. The letters were dispatched by Nottingham to Dr Wallis at Oxford requesting he examine them, beginning with those of the freshest date.

I send you herewith some letters from Monsieur Louvoy to Mons Lauzune which I desire you will decipher as soon as possible you can, they seeming to contain matters of great importance for their Majesties Service.³⁷¹

The importance and possible urgency of the letters had been clear to all, King William, Southwell and the secretary of state included. If the Battle of the Boyne had secured Ireland's east coast, the French naval victory of Beachy Head had seriously damaged the ability of the Royal Navy to defend Britain's shores. Not only was there a fear of the French landing in England, but also clear news that a small French force would enter St

³⁶⁹ Finch, II, p.347.

³⁷⁰ Finch, II, p.352.

³⁷¹ Wallis, BL, Mss 32499, f.216, consulted in microfilm in NLI, p.754.

George's Channel and thereby cut off William from England at a time when fears of invasion were at their height. In light of the urgency at this time, Nottingham advised Wallis that he would pay for messengers Wallis needed to bring to him any decoded messages, and to work tirelessly on them, sending them as and when they were done.

One of the letters contained there was from Seignelay to Lauzun and, like Pointis, Wallis was able to decipher it within a few days, albeit not without some trouble. This is perhaps through having gained some inside knowledge of the codes and how they were used from Pointis's correspondence, as previously mentioned. This related to news of considerable import to the English authorities, as it confirmed what they had found out from other sources. This he sends back on 17 July (o.s.), but with the proviso that he has not advanced regarding the others.

The rest are all from Mr Louvois and I am the more diffident of them, having never yet mastered any of his cipher. I suspect somewhat of particular in his way of ciphering, which I have not yet had the good hope to light upon.³⁷²

Wallis continued in his efforts at understanding the codes used by the French war minister but to no avail, and so informed Nottingham of the outcome in a letter 22 July, no doubt much to Nottingham's disappointment. Perhaps Wallis himself regarded the work primarily as a mathematical challenge, but in such a period of political upheaval and threats posed by war and an ever present fear of Jacobism, political naivety was dangerous, and Wallis may have felt vulnerable. He therefore took the opportunity to underline that this lack of success was not for want of trying. Regretting his inability to solve the cipher he pleaded that "your Lordship may not impute the failure to want of diligence, or want of due devotion to their Majesties' service." Doubtless echoing Nottingham's own concerns, Wallis suggested in a postscript that Williamite forces should search for cipher keys "among other things of Mons. De Lauzun seized in Ireland."

Despite this setback, the Oxford mathematician continued his efforts on behalf of the English authorities and decoded many other captured messages, between both French and Jacobite correspondents. So much work did he do that by December 1690 he felt he had to write to Nottingham to complain of the strain he was under. Not only had he not done any of his own personal work in the previous six months, but his health was suffering as a result.

³⁷² Wallis, BL 32499, f.242. (on microfilm at NLI Dublin).

I am very ready to serve his Majesty the best I can, gratis, and to lay down all my own affairs, as I have done this half year, to attend this service, but I have been indisposed as to my health all this winter, my eyesight fails me so that I must be forced to quit this service.³⁷³

From the evidence of Wallis's work and the other letters contained in Nottingham's papers, the main difference between the French and Jacobite letters was that the Jacobites largely used non-numeric codes. Other methods of concealment were employed, such as displacing letters of the alphabet. This had the advantage of being easier to commit to memory than numbers and thus left less of a paper trail, as evidently being arrested and found in possession of cipher keys would be compromising.

The Jacobite agents also used letters written in lemon juice, with the recipient required to hold a sheet to some source of heat to make the words reappear.³⁷⁴ An alternative was writing in milk, where the reader needed to scatter ashes on the pages in order to read them.³⁷⁵ Sometimes a number of these secrets would be used simultaneously, so that a regular letter also had secret writing, thus requiring the recipient to first uncover the letters and literally read between the lines. These would be in addition to the obvious masking of names of key individuals. For example, in some captured Jacobite correspondence Louis XIV is denoted by Mr. Browne while King James is down as Mr. Codrington.

That all these ruses were known to the secretary of state's officers is clear by the fact that samples appear transcribed in Nottingham's papers on a fairly regular basis over 1689–1691. Regarding alpha codes, Dr Wallis even drew up a table of letter displacements to assist the secretary's staff in themselves examining any correspondence deemed suspicious. At the end of his life, Wallis commented on his decoding work and its difficulties, stating proudly how successful he had been in this, but added that the later French ciphers were so complicated that he had not been able to decrypt all of them.

I afterwards ventured on many others, some of more, some of less difficulty, and scarce missed of any, that I undertook for many years, during our civil wars, and afterwards. But of late years the French

³⁷³ CSP, Domestic, 1690–1691, p.364.

³⁷⁴ See Burger, Pierre, *Papers of Eusebe Renaudot*. Renaudot was the main recipient in Paris of Jacobite messages and learned the different ways to read hidden writing.

³⁷⁵ Finch, ii, p.362 & p.377.

methods of cipher are grown so intricate beyond what it was wont to be that I failed of many, tho' I have master'd divers of them.³⁷⁶

It is possible here to advance the theory that the intricate code techniques used by Louvois may have been examples of the *Grand Chiffre* or Great Cipher developed in France by the Rossignol family, both Antoine (1600–1682) and his son Bonaventure, who continued his father's works. It is interesting that Strasser, writing on Renaissance and later codes, states that the Rossignols were mathematicians “almost equivalent to England's Dr John Wallis”. Given Wallis's own words, that he was not able to crack codes used by Louvois - akin to the Great Cipher - Strasser's comments seem inaccurate. Strasser himself says that the Great Cipher was not decrypted until the 1890s by a coding expert at the French ministry for foreign affairs.³⁷⁷

The English post office and the security of the realm

In time of war, suspicions of Jacobite spies and agents were widespread, and those linked to the postal service were potentially extremely damaging to regime interests. In this age, the postal service was at the centre of the Stuart intelligence network. As so much communication at the time went via the mail, the post office it was of considerable strategic importance.³⁷⁸ The English State's secret service working on behalf of the Charles II had in the 1660s an office at the London general post office expressly for the purpose of checking the mail. They employed a number of people who had the job of opening any suspicious letters, copying the contents and resealing them without it being possibly to detect any tampering.

In June 1689, a former employee of the post office, Sir Samuel Morland, wrote a letter to Charles Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, requesting assistance in gaining a pension. He told of his work for the Restoration government relating to the “secrets for opening letters and sealing them again, for ciphers and for falsifying seals”.³⁷⁹ He offered the new administration the chance of learning them. Morland went on to say that it was common at that time for foreign diplomats to deliberately send their packets into the post office in London at the last minutes before the mail was taken away. This was to minimise the time

³⁷⁶ DNB, vol.57, pp.15–16, citing Scriba, Biography, Wallis, p.38.

³⁷⁷ Gerhard F. Strasser, “The Rise of Cryptology in the European Renaissance” p. 305, in J.A. Bergstra and K. De Leeuw, *The History of Information Security: A Comprehensive Handbook* (., 2007). See also Singh, *The Code Book* (New York, 2000).

³⁷⁸ Marshall, *Intelligence and Espionage in the reign of Charles II, 1660-1685* p.78.

³⁷⁹ HMC 54, Buccleuch papers 2i, p.50

government clerks who were employed to examine letters would have to check the details of sender, recipient and, if time permitted, contents.

For the authorities, this was a key activity in order to try to intercept letters from those identified as French agents, as evidenced in the Finch manuscripts concerning captured Jacobite correspondence. There, opponents of the regime — some of whom specifically were working for the French and some French themselves — revealed the tools of the trade, including writing in invisible ink for hiding messages or again using multiple addresses generally via merchants based in different continental cities. That letters were captured was not surprising, but many clearly did get through, as evidenced in their survival in French records.³⁸⁰ In November 1690, Nottingham had received news that other letters destined for Tyrconnell and Louvois had been taken from a small ship out of Limerick and bound for France. As some of these letters had already been opened by the time Nottingham received them, he felt obliged to enquire further as to the details of the taking of the messages.

I desire you will let me know whether they were opened when delivered to you, or sealed by you before sending them, so that I may know whether the postmasters on the road have played any tricks with the letters.³⁸¹

The risk that Jacobite adherents could infiltrate the postal service and thereby either miscarry government letters or facilitate treasonous correspondence was certainly taken seriously. In February 1691, Queen Mary herself, on receiving a report that a post office employee in Bagshot was known to be a “papist”, specifically ordered that he be dismissed immediately.³⁸²

Another case is that of a certain Mr Sweetings. An anonymous tip-off letter sent to Hans Willem van Bentinck, Earl of Portland, was forwarded to Nottingham in May 1690. The letter states that “in the London post office there is a clerk named Sweetings who is in the pay of France and of the London papists, and manages their packages to and from France

³⁸⁰ AN, K1351, ff. 27–40, 49–54, 56–9 show letters and news sheets describing events in England and Ireland. They were addressed to Mr Pierret in Paris, but may well have originally been sent under separate cover via the Netherlands.

³⁸¹ CSP, Domestic, William & Mary 1690–1691, p. 155–156, HMSO, (London, 1898

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³⁸² CSP, 1690-1691., p.155-156.

by way of Holland.”³⁸³ The evidence for this was that letters destined for the English ambassador at Vienna, a Mr Paget, were refused by this clerk as they had been brought in too late in the day, while packages arriving later, brought in by a “French papist”, had been accepted for expedition that day. Whether these charges were true or the information was motivated by malice, it nonetheless underlines that the Williamites rightly believed the managing of letters was of paramount importance and applied resources accordingly.

Conclusion

The aim here was to examine ways in which information was appropriated, concealed and circulated in the war fought by the French and their Jacobite allies in Ireland. In a wider context, light was shed on how the new regime in Britain tried to intercept correspondence and understand its content. For letter correspondence, it is clear the French took considerable pains to ensure theirs were transported as regularly and securely as the available means allowed. Although some letters were intercepted, as evidenced from the Finch papers, this would seem the exception, and that the great majority of French correspondence was successfully sent and received.

Mathematician Dr John Wallis greatly aided the Williamite regime in deciphering some of the letters that they captured. It is, however, testament to the skill of the French cryptographers of the period that whatever different coding techniques were used by the French war department, their letters remained a mystery to Wallis, one of the foremost cipher experts of his time. Although the information war was as closely fought as other areas, ultimately it was not decisive. Military and naval matters decided the outcome of the conflict.

³⁸³ Finch ii, p.280.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Traditionally French support for the Jacobite war effort in Ireland in the years 1689-1691 has been examined in Irish historiography largely in terms of military assistance. A small number of works have taken a different view and considered the interaction between the two groups by looking at French and Irish sources and scholarship in tandem and have come up with new questions and fields of study.

This synthetic model is the one adopted here and applied to the concept of information as it related to French support for Jacobite Ireland. Through themes and individuals the importance of information, its acquisition, concealment and transmission is shown in the context of the changing French assessments of the Irish theatre. The information considered related to the areas of propaganda, diplomacy, court gossip, strategy and cryptography. Both thematic areas like propaganda and intelligence through correspondence were examined. French individuals, exemplary in the appropriation and exploitation of information were examined and their contributions weighed.

The study shows that the French went to considerable pains both to stay informed about the evolving situation in Jacobite Ireland and secure their channels of communication there. The efforts of the Williamite regime to disrupt and intercept that flow of information, both in a propaganda setting and regarding correspondence in an Irish and a Three Kingdom context is also outlined.

What emerges underlines the view that French support for James II was subject to internal French discussion and brokerage of influence. The study validates information as a framework of enquiry to better understand French interaction with Jacobites in Ireland, but is also applicable in a wider context, that of the use of intelligence in the conflict between France and the new Williamite regime in the Three Kingdoms in the early period of the Nine Years War.

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